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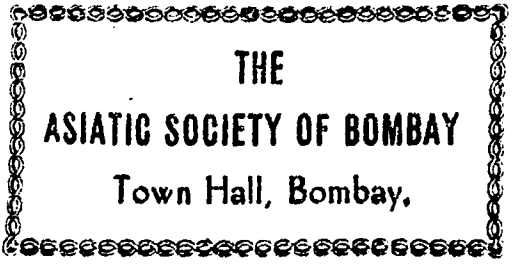

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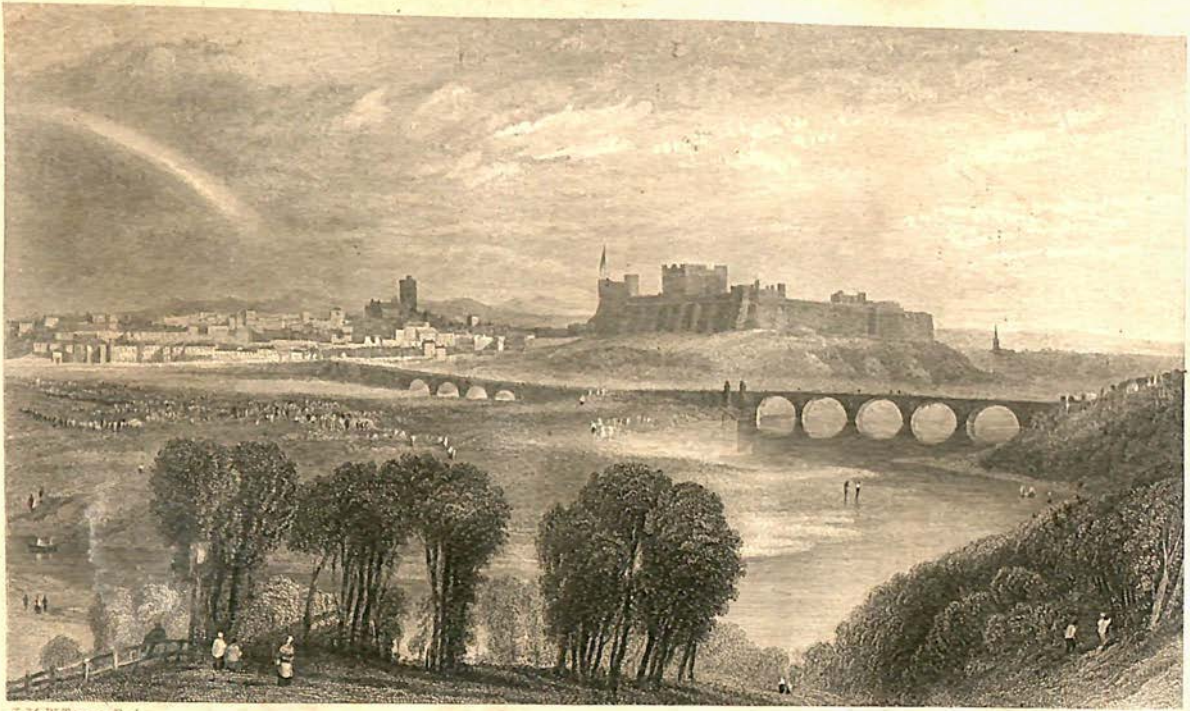

J. M. W. Turner R.A.

J. Goodall

CARLISLE.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. I.

52931

Smallholm Tower

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. I.

BORDER MINSTRELSY—I.

EDINBURGH:
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1861.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

Two volumes of the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border were published in 1802;—a third followed in 1803; and, in the course of subsequent editions, the arrangement of the ballads underwent various changes, and numerous additions were made to the Notes. Sir Walter Scott drew up, in March 1830, the "Introductory Remarks on Popular Poetry," which appear at the head of the present volume, and an "Essay on Imitations of the Ancient Ballad," which will be given in the fourth volume of this edition. He kept by him, as long as his health permitted him to continue his literary pursuits, an interleaved

copy of the Collection by which his name was first established, inserting various readings as chance threw them in his way, and enriching his annotations with whatever new lights conversation or books supplied. The Work is now printed according to the copy thus finally corrected, with some notes, distinguished by brackets, in which the Editor has endeavoured to compress such additional information concerning the incidents and localities mentioned in the Minstrelsy, as he could gather from the private correspondence of Sir Walter Scott, now in his hands, or remembered to have dropt from his lips in the course of his rides among the scenery of Border warfare.

One of the Reviewers of the Minstrelsy, when it first appeared, said, "In this collection are the materials for scores of metrical romances." This was a prophetic critic. In the text and notes of this early publication, we can now trace the primary incident, or broad out-

line of almost every romance, whether in verse or in prose, which Sir Walter Scott built in after life on the history or traditions of his country. The Editor has added references by which the reader will find it easy to compare the original detached anecdote, or brief sketch of character in these pages, with the expanded or embellished narratives and delineations of the Author's greater poems and novels.

The *airs* of some of these old ballads are for the first time appended to the present edition. The selection includes those which Sir Walter Scott himself liked the best; and they are transcribed, without variation, from the MSS. in his library.

According to Mr Motherwell, the Editor of "Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern, 1827," the Old Ballads, which appeared for the first time in this collection, are forty-three in number, viz.: *Auld Maitland, The Song of the Outlaw Murray, Lord Ewrie, The Lochmaben Harper,*

Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, Kinmont Willie, The Death of Featherstonehaugh, Bartrame's Dirge, Archie o' Ca'field, Johnny Armstrong's Good Night, The Lads of Wamphray, The Battle of Philiphaugh, The Gallant Grahames, The Battle of Pentland Hill, The Battle of Loudon Hill, The Battle of Bothwell Bridge, Erlington, The Douglas Tragedy, Young Benjie, Proud Lady Margaret, Sir Hugh Le Blond, Græme and Bewick, The Lament of the Border Widow, Johnnie of Braidislee, Katharine Janfarie, The Dowie Dens of Yarrow, The Gay Goss-hawk, Brown Adam, Jellon Grahame, Willie's Lady, Clerk Saunders, The Demon Lover, Rose the Red and White Lilly, Fause Foudrage, Kempion, The Wife of Usher's Well, King Henry, Prince Robert, Annan Water, The Cruel Sister, The Queen's Marie, The Bonny Hind, and Thomas the Rhymer.

Mr Motherwell adds—"Fortunate it was for the heroic and legendary song of Scotland that

the work was undertaken, and still more fortunate that its execution devolved upon one so well qualified in every respect to do its subject the most ample justice. Long will it live, a noble and interesting monument of his unwearied research, curious and minute learning, genius, and taste. It is truly a patriot's legacy to posterity; and much as it may be now esteemed, it is only in times yet gathering in the bosom of futurity, when the interesting traditions, the chivalrous and romantic legends, the wild superstitions, the tragic songs of Scotland, have wholly failed from the living memory, that this gift can be duly appreciated. It is then that these volumes will be conned with feelings akin to religious enthusiasm, that their strange and mystic lore will be treasured up in the heart as the precious record of days for ever passed away —that their grand stern legends will be listened to with reverential awe, as if the voice of a remote ancestor from the depths of the tomb, had

woke the thrilling strains of martial antiquity."—P. lxxix.

The drawings executed for the illustration of the present volume, and indeed of all the volumes of the series which it commences, are from the hand of Mr Turner, to whom the subjects were pointed out by Sir Walter Scott when that great artist visited him at Abbotsford in the autumn of 1830.

J. G. L.

LONDON, *March* 12, 1833.

TO

HIS GRACE

WALTER FRANCIS MONTAGU DOUGLAS SCOTT,

DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH AND QUEENSBERRY,

&c. &c. &c.

My Lord Duke,

In inscribing these volumes[1] to your Grace, I am fortunately emancipated from the necessity of intruding upon you the commonplace subjects of dedication. Most of these Poems have been long before the public, and were inscribed, at the time of their publication, to the various

[1] [The collective edition of Sir Walter Scott's Poetical Works. Edin. 1830.—Ed.]

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

ON

POPULAR POETRY,

AND ON

THE VARIOUS COLLECTIONS OF BALLADS OF BRITAIN, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF SCOTLAND.

THE Introduction originally prefixed to "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," was rather of a historical than a literary nature; and the remarks which follow have been added, to afford the general reader some information upon the character of Ballad Poetry.

It would be throwing away words to prove, what all must admit, the general taste and propensity of nations in their early state, to cultivate some species of rude poetry. When the

[1] [These remarks were first appended to the edition of 1830.—ED.]

organs and faculties of a primitive race have developed themselves, each for its proper and necessary use, there is a natural tendency to employ them in a more refined and regulated manner for purposes of amusement. The savage, after proving the activity of his limbs in the chase or the battle, trains them to more measured movements, to dance at the festivals of his tribe, or to perform obeisance before the altars of his deity. From the same impulse, he is disposed to refine the ordinary speech which forms the vehicle of social communication betwixt him and his brethren, until, by a more ornate diction, modulated by certain rules of rhythm, cadence, assonance of termination, or recurrence of sound or letter, he obtains a dialect more solemn in expression, to record the laws or exploits of his tribe, or more sweet in sound, in which to plead his own cause to his mistress.

This primeval poetry must have one general character in all nations, both as to its merits and its imperfections. The earlier poets have the advantage, and it is not a small one, of

having the first choice out of the stock of materials which are proper to the art; and thus they compel later authors, if they would avoid slavishly imitating the fathers of verse, into various devices, often more ingenious than elegant, that they may establish, if not an absolute claim to originality, at least a visible distinction betwixt themselves and their predecessors. Thus it happens, that early poets almost uniformly display a bold, rude, original cast of genius and expression. They have walked at free-will, and with unconstrained steps, along the wilds of Parnassus, while their followers move with constrained gestures and forced attitudes, in order to avoid placing their feet where their predecessors have stepped before them. The first bard who compared his hero to a lion, struck a bold and congenial note, though the simile, in a nation of hunters, be a very obvious one; but every subsequent poet who shall use it, must either struggle hard to give his lion, as heralds say, with a *difference*, or lie under the imputation of being a servile imitator.

It is not probable that, by any researches of modern times, we shall ever reach back to an earlier model of poetry than Homer; but as there lived heroes before Agamemnon, so, unquestionably, poets existed before the immortal Bard who gave the King of kings his fame; and he whom all civilized nations now acknowledge as the Father of Poetry, must have himself looked back to an ancestry of poetical predecessors, and is only held original because we know not from whom he copied. Indeed, though much must be ascribed to the riches of his own individual genius, the poetry of Homer argues a degree of perfection in an art which practice had already rendered regular, and concerning which, his frequent mention of the bards, or chanters of poetry, indicates plainly that it was studied by many, and known and admired by all.[1]

[1] [Sir Walter Scott, as this paragraph intimates, never doubted that the Iliad and Odyssey were substantially the works of one and the same individual. He said of the Wolfian hypothesis, that it was the most *irreligious* one he had heard of, and could never be believed in by any *poet*.—ED.]

It is indeed easily discovered, that the qualities necessary for composing such poems are not the portion of every man in the tribe; that the bard, to reach excellence in his art, must possess something more than a full command of words and phrases, and the knack of arranging them in such form as ancient examples have fixed upon as the recognised structure of national verse. The tribe speedily become sensible, that besides this degree of mechanical facility, which (like making what are called at school nonsense verses) may be attained by dint of memory and practice, much higher qualifications are demanded. A keen and active power of observation, capable of perceiving at a glance the leading circumstances from which the incident described derives its character; quick and powerful feelings, to enable the bard to comprehend and delineate those of the actors in his piece; and a command of language, alternately soft and elevated, and suited to express the conceptions which he had formed in his mind, are all necessary to eminence in the poetical art.

Above all, to attain the highest point of his profession, the poet must have that original power of embodying and detailing circumstances, which can place before the eyes of others a scene which only exists in his own imagination. This last high and creative faculty, namely, that of impressing the mind of the hearers with scenes and sentiments having no existence save through their art, has procured for the bards of Greece the term of Ποιητης, which, as it singularly happens, is literally translated by the Scottish epithet for the same class of persons, whom they termed the *Makers*. The French phrase of Trouveurs, or Troubadours, namely, the Finders, or Inventors, has the same reference to the quality of original conception and invention proper to the poetical art, and without which it can hardly be said to exist to any pleasing or useful purpose.

The mere arrangement of words into poetical rhythm, or combining them according to a technical rule or measure, is so closely connected with the art of music, that an alliance between these two fine arts is very soon closely formed.

It is fruitless to enquire which of them has been first invented, since doubtless the precedence is accidental; and it signifies little whether the musician adapts verses to a rude tune, or whether the primitive poet, in reciting his productions, falls naturally into a chant or song. With this additional accomplishment, the poet becomes ἀοιδος, or the man of song, and his character is complete when the additional accompaniment of a lute or harp is added to his vocal performance.

Here, therefore, we have the history of early poetry in all nations. But it is evident that, though poetry seems a plant proper to almost all soils, yet not only is it of various kinds, according to the climate and country in which it has its origin, but the poetry of different nations differs still more widely in the degree of excellence which it attains. This must depend in some measure, no doubt, on the temper and manners of the people, or their proximity to those spirit-stirring events which are naturally selected as the subject of poetry, and on the more comprehensive or energetic character of the language spoken by

the tribe. But the progress of the art is far more dependent upon the rise of some highly-gifted individual, possessing in a preeminent and uncommon degree the powers demanded, whose talents influence the taste of a whole nation, and entail on their posterity and language a character almost indelibly sacred. In this respect Homer stands alone and unrivalled, as a light from whose lamp the genius of successive ages, and of distant nations, has caught fire and illumination; and who, though the early poet of a rude age, has purchased for the era he has celebrated, so much reverence, that, not daring to bestow on it the term of barbarous, we distinguish it as the heroic period.

No other poet (sacred and inspired authors excepted) ever did, or ever will, possess the same influence over posterity, in so many distant lands, as has been acquired by the blind old man of Chios; yet we are assured that his works, collected by the pious care of Pisistratus, who caused to be united into their present form those divine poems, would otherwise, if preserved at all, have

appeared to succeeding generations in the humble state of a collection of detached ballads, connected only as referring to the same age, the same general subjects, and the same cycle of heroes, like the metrical poems of the Cid in Spain,[1] or of Robin Hood in England.

In other countries, less favoured, either in language or in picturesque incident, it cannot be supposed that even the genius of Homer could have soared to such exclusive eminence, since he must at once have been deprived of the subjects and themes so well adapted for his muse, and of the lofty, melodious, and flexible language in which he recorded them. Other nations, during the formation of their ancient poetry, wanted the genius of Homer, as well as his picturesque scenery and lofty language. Yet the investigation of the early poetry of every nation, even

[1] [The "Poema del Cid" (of which Mr Frere has translated some specimens) is, however, considered by every historian of Spanish literature, as the work of one hand; and is evidently more ancient than the detached ballads on the Adventures of the Campeador, which are included in the Cancioneros.—Ed.]

the rudest, carries with it an object of curiosity and interest. It is a chapter in the history of the childhood of society, and its resemblance to, or dissimilarity from, the popular rhymes of other nations in the same stage, must needs illustrate the ancient history of states; their slower or swifter progress towards civilisation; their gradual or more rapid adoption of manners, sentiments, and religion. The study, therefore, of lays rescued from the gulf of oblivion, must in every case possess considerable interest for the moral philosopher and general historian.

The historian of an individual nation is equally or more deeply interested in the researches into popular poetry, since he must not disdain to gather from the tradition conveyed in ancient ditties and ballads, the information necessary to confirm or correct intelligence collected from more certain sources. And although the poets were a fabling race from the very beginning of time, and so much addicted to exaggeration, that their accounts are seldom to be relied on without corroborative evidence, yet instances frequently

occur where the statements of poetical tradition are unexpectedly confirmed.

To the lovers and admirers of poetry as an art, it cannot be uninteresting to have a glimpse of the National Muse in her cradle, or to hear her babbling the earliest attempts at the formation of the tuneful sounds with which she was afterwards to charm posterity. And I may venture to add, that among poetry, which, however rude, was a gift of Nature's first fruits, even a reader of refined taste will find his patience rewarded, by passages in which the rude minstrel rises into sublimity or melts into pathos. These were the merits which induced the classical Addison[1] to write an elaborate commentary upon the ballad of Chevy Chase, and which roused, like the sound of a trumpet, the heroic blood of Sir Philip Sidney.[2]

[1] [See The Spectator, No. 70 and 74.]

[2] [I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with the sound of a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style.—SIDNEY.]

It is true, that passages of this high character occur seldom; for during the infancy of the art of poetry, the bards have been generally satisfied with a rude and careless expression of their sentiments; and even when a more felicitous expression, or loftier numbers, have been dictated by the enthusiasm of the composition, the advantage came unsought for, and perhaps unnoticed, either by the minstrel or the audience.

Another cause contributed to the tenuity of thought and poverty of expression, by which old ballads are too often distinguished. The apparent simplicity of the ballad stanza carried with it a strong temptation to loose and trivial composition. The collection of rhymes, accumulated by the earliest of the craft, appear to have been considered as forming a joint stock for the common use of the profession; and not mere rhymes only, but verses and stanzas, have been used as common property, so as to give an appearance of sameness and crudity to the whole series of popular poetry. Such, for instance, is the salutation so often repeated,

"Now Heaven thee save, thou brave young knight,
Now Heaven thee save and see."

And such the usual expression for taking counsel with,

"Rede me, rede me, brother dear,
My rede shall rise at thee."

Such also is the unvaried account of the rose and the brier, which are said to spring out of the grave of the hero and heroine of these metrical legends, with little effort at a variation of the expressions in which the incident is prescriptively told. The least acquaintance with the subject will recall a great number of commonplace verses, which each ballad-maker has unceremoniously appropriated to himself; thereby greatly facilitating his own task, and at the same time degrading his art by his slovenly use of over-scutched phrases. From the same indolence, the ballad-mongers of most nations have availed themselves of every opportunity of prolonging their pieces, of the same kind, without the labour of actual composition. If a message is to be delivered, the poet saves himself a little trouble, by using

exactly the same words in which it was originally couched, to secure its being transmitted to the person for whose ear it was intended. The bards of ruder climes, and less favoured languages, may indeed claim the countenance of Homer for such repetitions; but whilst, in the Father of Poetry, they give the reader an opportunity to pause, and look back upon the enchanted ground over which they have travelled, they afford nothing to the modern bard, save facilitating the power of stupifying the audience with stanzas of dull and tedious iteration.

Another cause of the flatness and insipidity, which is the great imperfection of ballad poetry, is to be ascribed less to the compositions in their original state, when rehearsed by their *authors*, than to the ignorance and errors of the reciters or transcribers, by whom they have been transmitted to us. The more popular the composition of an ancient poet, or *Maker*, became, the greater chance there was of its being corrupted; for a poem transmitted through a number of reciters, like a book reprinted in a multi-

tude of editions, incurs the risk of impertinent interpolations from the conceit of one rehearser, unintelligible blunders from the stupidity of another, and omissions equally to be regretted, from the want of memory in a third. This sort of injury is felt very early, and the reader will find a curious instance in the Introduction to the Romance of Sir Tristrem. Robert de Brunne there complains, that though the Romance of Sir Tristrem was the best which had ever been made, if it could be recited as composed by the author, Thomas of Erceldoune; yet that it was written in such an ornate style of language, and such a difficult strain of versification, as to lose all value in the mouths of ordinary minstrels, who could scarcely repeat one stanza without omitting some part of it, and marring, consequently, both the sense and the rhythm of the passage.[1] This

[1] ["That thou may hear in Sir Tristrem:
Over gestes it has the steem;
Over all that is or was,
If men it sayd as made Thomas;
But I hear it no man so say—
But of some copple some is away," &c.]

deterioration could not be limited to one author alone; others must have suffered from the same cause in the same or a greater degree. Nay, we are authorized to conclude, that in proportion to the care bestowed by the author upon any poem, to attain what his age might suppose to be the highest graces of poetry, the greater was the damage which it sustained by the inaccuracy of reciters, or their desire to humble both the sense and diction of the poem to their powers of recollection, and the comprehension of a vulgar audience. It cannot be expected that compositions subjected in this way to mutilation and corruption, should continue to present their original sense or diction; and the accuracy of our editions of popular poetry, unless in the rare event of recovering original or early copies, is lessened in proportion.

But the chance of these corruptions is incalculably increased, when we consider that the ballads have been, not in one, but innumerable instances of transmission, liable to similar alterations, through a long course of centuries, during

which they have been handed from one ignorant reciter to another, each discarding whatever original words or phrases time or fashion had, in his opinion, rendered obsolete, and substituting anachronisms by expressions taken from the customs of his own day. And here it may be remarked, that the desire of the reciter to be intelligible, however natural and laudable, has been one of the greatest causes of the deterioration of ancient poetry. The minstrel who endeavoured to recite with fidelity the words of the author, might indeed fall into errors of sound and sense, and substitute corruptions for words he did not understand. But the ingenuity of a skilful critic could often, in that case, revive and restore the original meaning; while the corrupted words became, in such cases, a warrant for the authenticity of the whole poem.[1]

[1] An instance occurs in the valuable old ballad, called Auld Maitland. The reciter repeated a verse, descriptive of the defence of a castle, thus:

"With *spring-wall*, stanes, and goads of airn
Among them fast he threw."

Spring-wall, is a corruption of *springald*, a military engine

In general, however, the later reciters appear to have been far less desirous to speak the author's words, than to introduce amendments and new readings of their own, which have always produced the effect of modernizing, and usually that of degrading and vulgarizing, the rugged sense and spirit of the antique minstrel. Thus, undergoing from age to age a gradual process of alteration and recomposition, our popular and oral minstrelsy has lost, in a great measure, its original appearance; and the strong touches by which it had been formerly characterised have been generally smoothed down and destroyed by a process similar to that by which a coin, passing from hand to hand, loses in circulation all the finer marks of the impress.

The very fine ballad of Chevy Chase is an example of this degrading species of alchymy, by which the ore of antiquity is deteriorated and adulterated. While Addison, in an age which had never attended to popular poetry, wrote his

for casting darts or stones; the restoration of which reading gives a precise and clear sense to the lines.

classical criticism on that ballad, he naturally took for his text the ordinary stall-copy, although he might, and ought to have suspected, that a ditty couched in the language nearly of his own time, could not be the same with that which Sir Philip Sidney, more than one hundred years before, had spoken of, as being "evil apparelled in the dust and cobwebs of an uncivilized age." The venerable Bishop Percy was the first to correct this mistake, by producing a copy of the song, as old at least as the reign of Henry VII., bearing the name of the author, or transcriber, Richard Sheale.[1] But even the Rev. Editor himself fell under the mistake of supposing the modern Chevy Chase to be a new copy of the original ballad, expressly modernized by some one later bard. On the contrary, the current version is now universally allowed to have been produced by the gradual alterations of numerous reciters, during two centuries, in the course of which the ballad has been gradually moulded into a composition bearing only a general re-

[1] See Percy's Reliques, vol. i. p. 2.

semblance to the original—expressing the same events and sentiments in much smoother language, and more flowing and easy versification; but losing in poetical fire and energy, and in the vigour and pithiness of the expression, a great deal more than it has gained in suavity of diction. Thus:—

"The Percy owt of Northumberland,
And a vowe to God mayd he,
That he wolde hunte in the mountayns
Off Cheviot within dayes thre,
In the mauger of doughty Dougles,
And all that ever with him be,"

Becomes,

"The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summer days to take," &c.

From this, and other examples of the same kind, of which many might be quoted, we must often expect to find the remains of Minstrel poetry, composed originally for the courts of princes and halls of nobles, disguised in the more modern and vulgar dialect in which they have been of late sung to the frequenters of the rustic ale-bench.

It is unnecessary to mention more than one other remarkable and humbling instance, printed in the curious collection entitled, *a Ballad Book*, where we find, in the words of the ingenious Editor,[1] a stupid ballad printed as it was sung in Annandale, founded on the well-known story of the Prince of Salerno's daughter, but with the uncouth change of Dysmal for Ghismonda, and Guiscard transformed into a greasy kitchen-boy.

"To what base uses may we not return!"

Sometimes a still more material and systematic difference appears between the poems of antiquity, as they were originally composed, and as they now exist. This occurs in cases where the longer metrical romances, which were in fashion during the middle ages, were reduced to shorter compositions, in order that they might be chanted before an inferior audience. A ballad, for example, of Thomas of Erceldoune, and his intrigues with the Queen of Faery-Land, is, or

[1] [Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq. The Ballad-Book was printed in 1823, and inscribed to Sir Walter Scott; the impression consisting of only thirty copies.]

has been, long current in Teviotdale, and other parts of Scotland. Two ancient copies of a poem, or romance, on the same subject, and containing very often the same words and turns of expression, are preserved in the libraries of the Cathedral of Lincoln and Peterborough. We are left to conjecture whether the originals of such ballads have been gradually contracted into their modern shape by the impatience of later audiences, combined with the lack of memory displayed by more modern reciters, or whether, in particular cases, some ballad-maker may have actually set himself to work to retrench the old details of the minstrels, and regularly and systematically to modernize, and if the phrase be permitted, to balladize, a metrical romance. We are assured, however, that "Roswal and Lilian" was sung through the streets of Edinburgh two generations since; and we know that the Romance of "Sir Eger, Sir Grime, and Sir Greysteil," had also its own particular chant, or tune. The stall-copies of both these romances, as they now exist, are very much abbreviated, and probably exhibit

them when they were undergoing, or had nearly undergone, the process of being cut down into ballads.

Taking into consideration the various indirect channels by which the popular poetry of our ancestors has been transmitted to their posterity, it is nothing surprising that it should reach us in a mutilated and degraded state, and that it should little correspond with the ideas we are apt to form of the first productions of national genius; nay, it is more to be wondered at that we possess so many ballads of considerable merit than that the much greater number of them which must have once existed, should have perished before our time.

Having given this brief account of ballad poetry in general, the purpose of the present prefatory remarks will be accomplished, by shortly noticing the popular poetry of Scotland, and some of the efforts which have been made to collect and illustrate it.

It is now generally admitted that the Scots and Picts, however differing otherwise, were each by descent a Celtic race; that they advanced in

a course of victory somewhat farther than the present frontier between England and Scotland, and about the end of the eleventh century subdued and rendered tributary the Britons of Strathcluyd, who were also a Celtic race like themselves. Excepting, therefore, the provinces of Berwickshire and the Lothians, which were chiefly inhabited by an Anglo-Saxon population, the whole of Scotland was peopled by different tribes of the same aboriginal race,[1]—a race passionately addicted to music, as appears from the kindred Celtic nations of Irish, Welsh, and Scottish, preserving each to this day a style and character of music peculiar to their own country, though all

[1] [The author seems to have latterly modified his original opinion on some parts of this subject. In his reviewal of Mr P. F. Tytler's History of Scotland (Quart. Rev. vol. xli. p. 328), he says, speaking of the period of the final subjugation of the Picts, "It would appear the *Scandinavians* had colonies along the fertile shores of Moray, and among the mountains of Sutherland, whose name speaks for itself, that it was given by the Norwegians; and probably they had also settlements in Caithness and the Orcades." In this essay, however, he adheres in the main to his Anti-Pinkertonian doctrine, and treats the Picts as Celts.—ED.]

three bear marks of general resemblance to each other. That of Scotland, in particular, is early noticed and extolled by ancient authors, and its remains, to which the natives are passionately attached, are still found to afford pleasure even to those who cultivate the art upon a more refined and varied system.

This skill in music did not, of course, exist without a corresponding degree of talent for a species of poetry, adapted to the habits of the country, celebrating the victories of triumphant clans pouring forth lamentations over fallen heroes, and recording such marvellous adventures as were calculated to amuse individual families around their household fires, or the whole tribe when regaling in the hall of the chief. It happened, however, singularly enough, that while the music continued to be Celtic in its general measure, the language of Scotland, most commonly spoken, began to be that of their neighbours the English, introduced by the multitude of Saxons who thronged to the court of Malcolm Canmore and his successors; by the crowds of

prisoners of war, whom the repeated ravages of the Scots in Northumberland carried off as slaves to their country; by the influence of the inhabitants of the richest and most populous provinces in Scotland, Berwickshire, namely, and the Lothians, over the more mountainous; lastly, by the superiority which a language like the Anglo-Saxon, considerably refined, long since reduced to writing, and capable of expressing the wants, wishes, and sentiments of the speakers, must have possessed over the jargon of various tribes of Irish and British origin, limited and contracted in every varying dialect, and differing, at the same time, from each other. This superiority being considered, and a fair length of time being allowed, it is no wonder that, while the Scottish people retained their Celtic music, and many of their Celtic customs, together with their Celtic dynasty, they should nevertheless have adopted, throughout the Lowlands, the Saxon language, while in the Highlands they retained the Celtic dialect, along with the dress, arms, manners, and government of their fathers.

There was, for a time, a solemn national recognisance that the Saxon language and poetry had not originally been that of the royal family. For at the coronations of the kings of Scotland, previous to Alexander III., it was a part of the solemnity, that a Celtic bard stepped forth, so soon as the king assumed his seat upon the fated stone, and recited the genealogy of the monarch in Celtic verse, setting forth his descent, and the right which he had by birth to occupy the place of sovereignty. For a time, no doubt, the Celtic songs and poems remained current in the Lowlands, while any remnant of the language yet lasted. The Gaelic or Irish bards, we are also aware, occasionally strolled into the Lowlands, where their music might be received with favour, even after their recitation was no longer understood. But though these aboriginal poets showed themselves at festivals and other places of public resort, it does not appear that, as in Homer's time, they were honoured with high places at the board, and savoury morsels of the chine, but they seem rather to have been accounted fit company

for the feigned fools and sturdy beggars, with whom they were ranked by a Scottish statute.[1]

Time was necessary wholly to eradicate one language and introduce another, but it is remarkable that, at the death of Alexander the Third, the last Scottish king of the pure Celtic race, the popular lament for his death was composed in Scoto-English, and, though closely resembling the modern dialect, is the earliest example we have of that language, whether in prose or poetry.[2] About the same time flourished the celebrated Thomas the Rhymer, whose poem, written in English, or Lowland Scottish, with the most anxious attention both to versification and alliteration, forms, even as it now exists, a very curious specimen of the early romance.[3] Such compli-

[1] A curious account of the reception of an Irish or Celtic bard at a festival, is given in Sir John Holland's Buke of the Houlat, *Bannatyne edition*, p. liii.

[2] [" Whan Alexander our king was ded, "
Wha Scotland led in luve and lee,
Away was sons of ale and bred,
Of wine and wax, of game and glee," &c.]

[3] [See a subsequent volume of this collection.]

cated construction was greatly too concise for the public ear, which is best amused by a looser diction, in which numerous repetitions, and prolonged descriptions, enable the comprehension of the audience to keep up with the voice of the singer or reciter, and supply the gaps which in general must have taken place, either through a failure of attention in the hearers, or of voice and distinct enunciation on the part of the minstrel.

The usual stanza which was selected as the most natural to the language and the sweetest to the ear, after the complex system of the more courtly measures, used by Thomas of Erceldoune, was laid aside, was that which, when originally introduced, we very often find arranged in two lines, thus:—

"Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed, most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company, whose armour shone like gold;"

but which, after being divided into four, constitutes what is now generally called the ballad stanza,—

"Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company,
Whose armour shone like gold."

The breaking of the lines contains a plainer intimation, how the stanza ought to be read, than every one could gather from the original mode of writing out the poem, where the position of the cæsura, or inflection of voice, is left to the individual's own taste. This was sometimes exchanged for a stanza of six lines, the third and sixth rhyming together. For works of more importance and pretension, a more complicated versification was still retained, and may be found in the tale of Ralph Coilzear,[1] the Adventures of Arthur at the Tarn Wathelyn, Sir Gawain, and Sir Gologras, and other scarce romances. A specimen of this structure of verse has been handed down to our times in the stanza of Christ Kirk on the Green, transmitted by King James I., to

[1] [This, and most of the other romances here referred to, may be found reprinted in a volume entitled, "Select Remains of the Ancient Popular Poetry of Scotland," (Edin. 1822. Small 4to.) Edited by Mr David Laing, and inscribed to Sir Walter Scott.]

Allan Ramsay and to Burns. The excessive passion for alliteration, which formed a rule of the Saxon poetry, was also retained in the Scottish poems of a more elevated character, though the more ordinary minstrels and ballad-makers threw off the restraint.

The varieties of stanza thus adopted for popular poetry were not, we may easily suppose, left long unemployed. In frontier regions, where men are continually engaged in active enterprise, betwixt the task of defending themselves and annoying their neighbours, they may be said to live in an atmosphere of danger, the excitation of which is peculiarly favourable to the encouragement of poetry. Hence, the expressions of Lesly the historian, quoted in the following Introduction, in which he paints the delight taken by the Borderers in their peculiar species of music, and the rhyming ballads in which they celebrated the feats of their ancestors, or recorded their own ingenious stratagems in predatory warfare. In the same Introduction, the reader will find the reasons alleged why the taste for song

was and must have been longer preserved on the Border than in the interior of the country.

Having thus made some remarks on early poetry in general, and on that of Scotland in particular, the Editor's purpose is, to mention the fate of some previous attempts to collect ballad poetry, and the principles of selection and publication which have been adopted by various editors of learning and information; and although the present work chiefly regards the Ballads of Scotland, yet the investigation must necessarily include some of the principal collections among the English also.

Of manuscript records of ancient ballads, very few have been yet discovered. It is probable that the minstrels, seldom knowing either how to read or write, trusted to their well-exercised memories. Nor was it a difficult task to acquire a sufficient stock in trade for their purpose, since the Editor has not only known many persons capable of retaining a very large collection of legendary lore of this kind, but there was a period in his own life, when a memory that ought

to have been charged with more valuable matter, enabled him to recollect as many of these old songs as would have occupied several days in the recitation.

The press, however, at length superseded the necessity of such exertions of recollection, and sheafs of ballads issued from it weekly, for the amusement of the sojourners at the alehouse, and the lovers of poetry in grange and hall, where such of the audience as could not read, had at least read unto them. These fugitive leaves, generally printed upon broadsides, or in small miscellanies called Garlands, and circulating amongst persons of loose and careless habits—so far as books were concerned—were subject to destruction from many causes; and as the editions in the early age of printing were probably much limited, even those published as chap-books in the early part of the 18th century, are rarely met with.

Some persons, however, seem to have had what their contemporaries probably thought the bizarre taste of gathering and preserving collec-

tions of this fugitive poetry. Hence the great body of ballads in the Pepysian collection at Cambridge, made by that Secretary Pepys, whose Diary is so very amusing; and hence the still more valuable deposit, in three volumes folio, in which the late Duke John of Roxburghe took so much pleasure, that he was often found enlarging it with fresh acquisitions, which he pasted in and registered with his own hand.

The first attempt, however, to reprint a collection of ballads for a class of readers distinct from those for whose use the stall-copies were intended, was that of an anonymous editor of three 12mo volumes, which appeared in London, with engravings. These volumes came out in various years, in the beginning of the 18th century.[1] The editor writes with some flippancy,

[1] ["A Collection of Old Ballads, collected from the best and most ancient Copies extant, with Introductions, Historical and Critical, illustrated with copperplates." This anonymous collection, first published in 1723, was so well received, that it soon passed to a second edition, and two more volumes were added in 1723 and 1725. The third edition of the first volume is dated 1727.—Ed.]

but with the air of a person superior to the ordinary drudgery of a mere collector. His work appears to have been got up at considerable expense, and the general introductions and historical illustrations which are prefixed to the various ballads, are written with an accuracy of which such a subject had not till then been deemed worthy. The principal part of the collection consists of stall-ballads, neither possessing much poetical merit, nor any particular rarity or curiosity. Still this original Miscellany holds a considerable value amongst collectors; and as the three volumes—being published at different times—are seldom found together, they sell for a high price when complete.

We may now turn our eyes to Scotland, where the facility of the dialect, which cuts off the consonants in the termination of the words, so as greatly to simplify the task of rhyming, and the habits, dispositions, and manners of the people, were of old so favourable to the composition of ballad-poetry, that, had the Scottish songs been

preserved, there is no doubt a very curious history might have been composed by means of minstrelsy only, from the reign of Alexander III. in 1285, down to the close of the Civil Wars in 1745. That materials for such a collection existed, cannot be disputed, since the Scottish historians often refer to old ballads as authorities for general tradition. But their regular preservation was not to be hoped for or expected. Successive garlands of song sprung, flourished, faded, and were forgotten, in their turn; and the names of a few specimens are only preserved, to show us how abundant the display of these wild flowers had been.

Like the natural free gifts of Flora, these poetical garlands can only be successfully sought for where the land is uncultivated; and civilisation and increase of learning are sure to banish them, as the plough of the agriculturist bears down the mountain daisy. Yet it is to be recorded with some interest, that the earliest surviving specimen of the Scottish press, is a Miscellany of Mil-

lar and Chapman,[1] which preserves a considerable fund of Scottish popular poetry, and among other things, no bad specimen of the gests of Robin Hood, "the English ballad-maker's joy," and whose renown seems to have been as freshly preserved in the north as on the southern shores of the Tweed. There were probably several collections of Scottish ballads and metrical pieces during the seventeenth century. A very fine one, belonging to Lord Montagu, perished in the fire which consumed Ditton House, about twenty years ago.

James Watson, in 1706, published, at Edinburgh, a miscellaneous collection in three parts, containing some ancient poetry. But the first editor who seems to have made a determined effort to preserve our ancient popular poetry, was

[1] [A facsimile reprint, in black-letter, of the Original Tracts which issued from the press of Walter Chepman and Andro Myllar at Edinburgh, in the year 1508, was published under the title of "The Knightly Tale of Golagrus and Gawane, and other Ancient Poems," in 1827, 4to. The "litil geste" of Robin Hood, referred to in the text, is a fragment of a piece contained in Ritson's Collection.—ED.]

the well-known Allan Ramsay, in his Evergreen, containing chiefly extracts from the ancient Scottish Makers, whose poems have been preserved in the Bannatyne Manuscript, but exhibiting amongst them some popular ballads. Amongst these is the *Battle of Harlaw*, apparently from a modernized copy, being probably the most ancient Scottish historical ballad of any length now in existence.[1] He also inserted, in the same collection, the genuine Scottish Border ballad of

[1] That there was such an ancient ballad is certain, and the tune, adapted to the bagpipes, was long extremely popular, and, within the remembrance of man, the first which was played at *kirns* and other rustic festivals. But there is a suspicious phrase in the ballad as it is published by Allan Ramsay. When describing the national confusion, the bard says,

> "Sen the days of auld King Harie,
> Such slauchter was not heard or seen."

Query, who was the "auld King Harie" here meant? If Henry VIII. be intended, as is most likely, it must bring the date of the poem, at least of that verse, as low as Queen Mary's time. The ballad is said to have been printed in 1668. A copy of that edition would be a great curiosity.

[See the preface to the reprint of this ballad, in a volume of "Early Metrical Tales." 12mo, Edin. 1826.—Ed.]

Johnnie Armstrong, copied from the recitation of a descendant of the unfortunate hero, in the sixth generation. This poet also included in the Evergreen, Hardyknute, which, though evidently modern, is a most spirited and beautiful imitation of the ancient ballad. In a subsequent collection of lyrical pieces, called the Tea-Table Miscellany, Allan Ramsay inserted several old ballads, such as *Cruel Barbara Allan*, *The Bonnie Earl of Murray*, *There came a Ghost to Margaret's door*, and two or three others. But his unhappy plan of writing new words to old tunes, without at the same time preserving the ancient verses, led him, with the assistance of "some ingenious young gentlemen," to throw aside many originals, the preservation of which would have been much more interesting than any thing which has been substituted in their stead.[1]

[1] Green be the pillow of honest Allan, at whose lamp Burns lighted his brilliant torch! It is without enmity to his memory that we record his mistake in this matter. But it is impossible not to regret that such an affecting tale as that of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray should have fallen into his hands. The southern reader must learn, for what

In fine, the task of collecting and illustrating ancient popular poetry, whether in England or Scotland, was never executed by a competent person, possessing the necessary powers of selection and annotation, till it was undertaken by Dr Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore in Ireland.

northern reader is ignorant?) that these two beautiful women were kinsfolk, and so strictly united in friendship, that even personal jealousy could not interrupt their union. They were visited by a handsome and agreeable young man, who was acceptable to them both, but so captivated with their charms, that, while confident of a preference on the part of both, he was unable to make a choice between them. While this singular situation of the three persons of the tale continued, the breaking out of the plague forced the two ladies to take refuge in the beautiful valley of Lynedoch, where they built themselves a bower, in order to avoid human intercourse and the danger of infection. The lover was not included in their renunciation of society. He visited their retirement, brought with him the fatal disease, and unable to return to Perth, which was his usual residence, was nursed by the fair friends with all the tenderness of affection. He died, however, having first communicated the infection to his lovely attendants. They followed him to the grave, lovely in their lives, and undivided in their death. Their burial place, in the vicinity of the bower which they built, is still visible, in the romantic vicinity of Lord Lynedoch's mansion, and prolongs the memory of female friendship, which even rivalry could

This reverend gentleman, himself a poet, and ranking high among the literati of the day, com-

not dissolve. Two stanzas of the original ballad alone survive:

"Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lasses;
They bigged a bower on yon burn-brae,
And theekit it ower wi' rashes.

* * * *

They wadna rest in Methvin kirk,
Among their gentle kin;
But they wad lie in Leduoch braes,
To beek against the sun."

There is, to a Scottish ear, so much tenderness and simplicity in these verses, as must induce us to regret that the rest should have been superseded by a pedantic modern song, turning upon the most unpoetic part of the legend, the hesitation, namely, of the lover, which of the ladies to prefer. One of the most touching expressions in the song is the following exclamation:

"Oh, Jove! she's like thy Pallas."

Another song, of which Ramsay chose a few words for the theme of a *rifacimento*, seems to have been a curious specimen of minstrel recitation. It was partly verse, partly narrative, and was alternately sung and repeated. The story was the escape of a young gentleman, pursued by a cruel uncle, desirous of his estate; or a bloody rival, greedy of his life; or the relentless father of his lady-love, or some such remorseless character, having sinister intentions on

manding access to the individuals and institutions which could best afford him materials, gave the

the person of the fugitive. The object of his rapacity or vengeance being nearly overtaken, a shepherd undertakes to mislead the pursuer, who comes in sight just as the object of his pursuit disappears, and greets the shepherd thus:

"PURSUER.

Good morrow, shepherd, and my friend,
Saw you a young man this way riding;
With long black hair, on a bob-tail'd mare,
And I know that I cannot be far behind him?

THE SHEPHERD.

Yes, I did see him this way riding,
And what did much surprise my wit,
The man and the mare flew up in the air,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet.
Behind yon white cloud I see her tail wave,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet."

The tune of these verses is an extremely good one, and Allan Ramsay has adopted a bacchanalian song to it with some success; but we should have thanked him much had he taken the trouble to preserve the original legend of the old minstrel. The valuable and learned friend[1] to whom we owe this mutilated account of it, has often heard it sung among the High Jinks of Scottish lawyers of the last generation.

1 [The Right Honourable William Adam, Lord Chief Commissioner of the Scotch Jury Court.—ED.]

public the result of his researches in a work entitled "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," in three volumes, published in London 1765, which has since gone through four editions.[1] The taste with which the materials were chosen, the extreme felicity with which they were illustrated, the display at once of antiquarian knowledge and classical reading which the collection indicated, render it difficult to imitate, and impossible to excel a work, which must always be held among the first of its class in point of merit, though not actually the foremost in point of time. But neither the high character of the work, nor the rank and respectability of the author, could protect him or his labours, from the invidious attacks of criticism.

The most formidable of these were directed by Joseph Ritson, a man of acute observation, profound research, and great labour. These valuable attributes were unhappily combined with an

[1] [Sir Walter Scott corresponded frequently with the Bishop of Dromore, at the time when he was collecting the materials of the "Border Minstrelsy."—Ed.]

eager irritability of temper, which induced him to treat antiquarian trifles with the same seriousness which men of the world reserve for matters of importance, and disposed him to drive controversies into personal quarrels, by neglecting, in literary debate, the courtesies of ordinary society.[1] It ought to be said, however, by one who knew him well, that this irritability of disposition was a constitutional and physical infirmity; and that Ritson's extreme attachment to the severity of

[1] For example, in quoting a popular song, well known by the name of Maggie Lauder, the editor of the Reliques had given a line of the Dame's address to the merry minstrel, thus:

"Gin ye be Rob, I've heard of you,
You dwell upon the Border."

Ritson insisted the genuine reading was,

"Come ye frae the Border?"

And he expatiates with great keenness on the crime of the Bishop's having sophisticated the text (of which he produces no evidence), to favour his opinion, that the Borders were a favourite abode of the minstrels of both kingdoms. The fact, it is believed, is undoubted, and the one reading seems to support it as well as the other.—[Joseph Ritson died in 1803.]

truth, corresponded to the rigour of his criticisms upon the labours of others. He seems to have attacked Bishop Percy with the greater animosity, as bearing no good-will to the hierarchy, in which that prelate held a distinguished place.

Ritson's criticism, in which there was too much horse-play, was grounded on two points of accusation. The first regarded Dr Percy's definition of the order and office of minstrels, which Ritson considered as designedly overcharged, for the sake of giving an undue importance to his subject. The second objection respected the liberties which Dr Percy had taken with his materials, in adding to, retrenching, and improving them, so as to bring them nearer to the taste of his own period. We will take some brief notice of both topics.

First, Dr Percy, in the first edition of his work, certainly laid himself open to the charge of having given an inaccurate, and somewhat exaggerated account, of the English Minstrels, whom he defined to be an "order of men in the middle ages,

who subsisted by the arts of poetry and music, and sung to the harp the verses which they themselves composed." The reverend editor of the Reliques produced in support of this definition many curious quotations, to show that in many instances the persons of these minstrels had been honoured and respected, their performances applauded and rewarded by the great and the courtly, and their craft imitated by princes themselves.

Against both these propositions, Ritson made a determined opposition. He contended, and probably with justice, that the minstrels were not necessarily poets, or in the regular habit of composing the verses which they sung to the harp; and indeed, that the word *minstrel*, in its ordinary acceptation, meant no more than musician.

Dr Percy, from an amended edition of his Essay on Minstrelsy, prefixed to the fourth edition of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, seems to have been, to a certain point, convinced by the critic's reasoning; for he has extended the definition impugned by Ritson, and the minstrels are thus described as singing verses "composed by themselves or *others*." This we apprehend to

be a tenable position; for, as on the one hand it seems too broad an averment to say that all minstrels were by profession poets, so on the other, it is extravagant to affirm that men who were constantly in the habit of reciting verse, should not frequently have acquired that of composing it, especially when their bread depended on giving pleasure; and to have the power of producing novelty, is a great step towards that desirable end. No unprejudiced reader, therefore, can have any hesitation in adopting Bishop Percy's definition of the minstrels, and their occupation, as qualified in the fourth edition of his Essay, implying that they were sometimes poets, sometimes the mere reciters of the poetry of others.

On the critic's second proposition, Dr Percy successfully showed, that at no period of history was the word minstrel applied to instrumental music exclusively; and he has produced sufficient evidence, that the talents of the profession were as frequently employed in chanting or reciting poetry as in playing the mere tunes. There is appearance of distinction being sometimes made

between minstrel recitations and minstrelsy of music alone; and we may add a curious instance, to those quoted by the Bishop. It is from the singular ballad respecting Thomas of Erceldoune,[1] which announces the proposition, that *tongue* is chief of minstrelsy.

We may also notice, that the word minstrel being in fact derived from the Minné-singer of the Germans, means, in its primary sense, one who *sings* of *love*, a sense totally inapplicable to a mere instrumental musician.

A second general point on which Dr Percy was fiercely attacked by Mr Ritson, was also one on which both the parties might claim a right to sing *Te Deum*. It respected the rank or *status* which was held by the minstrels in society during the middle ages. On this point the editor of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry had produced the most satisfactory evidence, that at the courts of the Anglo-Norman princes the professors of the gay science were the favourite solacers of the

[1] Select Remains of Popular Pieces of Poetry. Edinburgh, 1822.

leisure hours of princes, who did not themselves disdain to share their tuneful labours, and imitate their compositions. Mr Ritson replied to this with great ingenuity, arguing, that such instances of respect paid to French minstrels reciting in their native language in the court of Norman monarchs, though held in Britain, argued nothing in favour of English artists professing the same trade; and of whose compositions, and not of those existing in the French language, Dr Percy professed to form his collection. The reason of the distinction betwixt the respectability of the French minstrels, and the degradation of the same class of men in England, Mr Ritson plausibly alleged to be, that the English language, a mixed speech betwixt Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French, was not known at the court of the Anglo-Norman kings until the reign of Edward III.;[1] and that,

[1] [That monarch first used the vernacular English dialect in a motto which he displayed on his shield at a celebrated tournament. The legend which graced the representation of a white swan on the king's buckler, ran thus:—

"Ha! ha! the whyte swan!
By Goddis soule I am thy man."

therefore, until a very late period, and when the lays of minstrelsy were going out of fashion, English performers in that capacity must have confined the exercise of their talents to the amusement of the vulgar. Now, as it must be conceded to Mr Ritson, that almost all the English metrical romances which have been preserved till the present day, are translated from the French, it may also be allowed, that a class of men employed chiefly in rendering into English the works of others, could not hold so high a station as those who aspired to original composition; and so far the critic has the best of the dispute. But Mr Ritson has over-driven his argument, since their was assuredly a period in English history, when the national minstrels, writing in the national dialect, were, in proportion to their merit in their calling, held in honour and respect.

Thomas the Rhymer, for example, a minstrel who flourished in the end of the twelfth century, was not only a man of talent in his art, but of some rank in society; the companion of nobles, and himself a man of landed property. He, and

his contemporary Kendal, wrote, as we are assured by Robert de Brunne, in a passage already alluded to, a kind of English, which was designed for "pride and nobleye,"[1] and not for such inferior persons as Robert himself addressed, and to whose comprehension he avowedly lowered his language and structure of versification. There existed, therefore, during the time of this historian, a more refined dialect of the English language, used by such composers of popular poetry as moved in a higher circle; and there can be no doubt, that while their productions were held in such high esteem, the authors must have been honoured in proportion.

The education bestowed upon James I. of

[1] [The learned editor of Warton's History of English Poetry, is of opinion that Sir Walter Scott misinterpreted the passage referred to. De Brunne, according to this author's text, says of the elder reciters of the metrical romance,

"They said'it for pride and nobleye;
That none were soulk as they;"

i. e. they recited it in a style so lofty and noble, that none have since equalled them.—*Warton, edit.* 1824, vol. i. p. 183.—ED.]

Scotland, when brought up under the charge of Henry IV., comprehended both music and the art of vernacular poetry; in other words, Minstrelsy in both branches. That poetry, of which the King left several specimens, was, as is well known, English; nor is it to be supposed that a prince, upon whose education such sedulous care was bestowed, would have been instructed in an art which, if we are to believe Mr Ritson, was degraded to the last degree, and discreditable to its professors. The same argument is strengthened by the poetical exercises of the Duke of Orleans, in English, written during his captivity after the battle of Agincourt.[1] It could not be supposed that the noble prisoner was to solace his hours of imprisonment with a degrading and vulgar species of composition.

We could produce other instances to show that this acute critic has carried his argument considerably too far. But we prefer taking a general view of the subject, which seems to explain clearly

[1] See the Edition printed by Mr Watson Taylor, for the Roxburghe Club.

how contradictory evidence should exist on it, and why instances of great personal respect to individual minstrels, and a high esteem of the art, are quite reconcilable with much contempt thrown on the order at large.

All professors of the fine arts—all those who contribute, not to the necessities of life, but to the enjoyments of society, hold their professional respectability by the severe tenure of exhibiting excellence in their department. We are well enough satisfied with the tradesman who goes through his task in a workmanlike manner, nor are we disposed to look down upon the divine, the lawyer, or the physician, unless they display gross ignorance of their profession: we hold it enough, that if they do not possess the highest knowledge of their respective sciences, they can at least instruct us on the points we desire to know. But

> —— "mediocribus esse poetis
> Non di, non homines, non concessere columnæ."

The same is true respecting the professors of

painting, of sculpture, of music, and the fine arts in general. If they exhibit paramount excellence, no situation in society is too high for them which their manners enable them to fill; if they fall short of the highest point of aim, they degenerate into sign-painters, stone-cutters, common crowders, doggrel rhymers, and so forth, the most contemptible of mankind. The reason of this is evident. Men must be satisfied with such a supply of their actual wants as can be obtained in the circumstances, and should an individual want a coat, he must employ the village tailor, if Stultze is not to be had. But if he seeks for delight, the case is quite different; and he that cannot hear Pasta or Sontag, would be little solaced for the absence of these sirens, by the strains of a crack-voiced ballad singer. Nay, on the contrary, the offer of such inadequate compensation, would only be regarded as an insult, and resented accordingly.

The theatre affords the most appropriate example of what we mean. The first circles in society are open to persons eminently distin-

guished in the drama ; and their rewards are, in proportion to those who profess the useful arts, incalculably higher. But those who lag in the rear of the dramatic art, are proportionally poorer and more degraded than those who are the lowest of a useful trade or profession. These instances will enable us readily to explain why the greater part of the minstrels, practising their profession in scenes of vulgar mirth and debauchery, humbling their art to please the ears of drunken clowns, and living with the dissipation natural to men whose precarious subsistence is, according to the ordinary phrase, from hand to mouth only, should fall under general contempt, while the *stars* of the profession, to use a modern phrase, looked down on them from the distant empyrean, as the planets do upon those shooting exhalations arising from gross vapours in the nether atmosphere.

The debate, therefore, resembles the apologue of the gold and silver shield. Dr Percy looked on the minstrel in the palmy and exalted state to which, no doubt, many were elevated by their

talents, like those who possess excellence in the fine arts in the present day; and Ritson considered the reverse of the medal, when the poor and wandering glee-man was glad to purchase his bread by singing his ballads at the alehouse, wearing a fantastic habit, and latterly sinking into a mere crowder upon an untuned fiddle, accompanying his rude strains with a ruder ditty, the helpless associate of drunken revellers, and marvellously afraid of the constable and parish-beadle.[1] The difference betwixt those holding

[1] In Fletcher's comedy of "Monsieur Thomas," such a fiddler is questioned as to the ballads he is best versed in, and replies,

> "Under your mastership's correction, I can sing,
> 'The Duke of Norfolk,' or the merry ballad
> Of 'Divius and Lazarus;' 'The Rose of England;'
> 'In Crete, where Dedimus first began;'
> 'Jonas his crying out against Coventry.'
>
> *Thomas.* Excellent!
> Rare matters all.
>
> *Fiddler.* 'Mawdlin the Merchant's Daughter;'
> 'The Devil and ye Dainty Dames.'
>
> *Thomas* Rare still.
>
> *Fiddler.* 'The Landing of the Spaniards at Bow,
> With the bloody battle at Mile-end.'"

the extreme positions of highest and lowest in such a profession, cannot surely be more marked than that which separated David Garrick or John Kemble from the outcasts of a strolling company, exposed to penury, indigence, and persecution according to law.[1]

The poor minstrel is described as accompanying the young rake in his revels. Launcelot describes

> "The gentleman himself, young Monsieur Thomas,
> Errant with his furious myrmidons;
> The *fiery fiddler* and myself—now singing,
> Now beating at the doors," &c.

[1] [The "Song of the Traveller," an ancient piece lately discovered in the Cathedral Library of Exeter, and published by the Rev. Mr Coneybeare, in his Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry (1826), furnishes a most curious picture of the life of the Northern Scald, or Minstrel, in the high and palmy state of the profession. The reverend editor thus translates the closing lines:

> "Ille est carissimus Terræ incolis
> Cui Deus addidit Hominum imperium gerendum,
> Quum ille eos [bardos] habeat caros.
> Ita comeantes cum cantilenis feruntur
> Bardi hominum per terras multas;
> Simul eos remuneratur ob cantilenas pulchras,
> *Muneribus immensis*, ille qui ante nobiles
> Vult judicium suum extollere, dignitatem sustinere.
> Habet ille sub cœlo stabilem famam."—P. 22.

There was still another and more important subject of debate, between Dr Percy and his hostile critic. The former, as a poet and a man of taste, was tempted to take such freedoms with his original ballads, as might enable him to please a more critical age than that in which they were

Mr Coneybeare contrasts this "flattering picture" with the following "melancholy specimen" of the Minstrel life of later times—contained in some verses by Richard Sheale (the alleged author of the old Chevy Chase), which are preserved in one of the Ashmolean MSS.

"Now for the good cheere that I have had here.
I give you hearty thanks with bowing of my shankes,
Desiring you by petition to grant me such commission—
Because my name is Sheale, that both for meat and meale,
To you I may resort sum tyme for my comforte.
For I perceive here at all tymes is goode cheere,
Both ale, wyne, and beere, as hyt doth now appere,
I perceive without fable ye keepe a good table.
I can be contente, if hyt be out of Lent,
A piece of beefe to take my honger to aslake,
Both mutton and veale is goode for Rycharde Sheale;
Though I looke so grave, I were a veri knave,
If I wold thinke scorne ether evenynge or morne,
Beyng in honger, of fresshe samon or kongar,
I can fynde in my hearte, with my frendis to take a parte
Of such as Godde shal sende, and thus I make an ende.
Now farewel, good myn Hoste, I thank youe for youre coste,
Untyl another tyme, and thus do I ende my ryme."—P. 28.

composed. Words were thus altered, phrases improved, and whole verses were inserted or omitted at pleasure. Such freedoms were especially taken with the poems published from a folio manuscript in Dr Percy's own possession, very curious from the miscellaneous nature of its contents, but unfortunately having many of the leaves mutilated, and injured in other respects, by the gross carelessness and ignorance of the transcriber. Anxious to avail himself of the treasures which this manuscript contained, the editor of the Reliques did not hesitate to repair and renovate the songs which he drew from this corrupted yet curious source, and to accommodate them with such emendations as might recommend them to the modern taste.

For these liberties with his subject, Ritson censured Dr Percy in the most uncompromising terms, accused him, in violent language, of interpolation and forgery, and insinuated that there existed no such thing *in rerum natura* as that folio manuscript, so often referred to as the authority of originals inserted in the Reliques. In this charge,

the eagerness of Ritson again betrayed him farther than judgment and discretion, as well as courtesy, warranted. It is no doubt highly desirable that the text of ancient poetry should be given untouched and uncorrupted. But this is a point which did not occur to the editor of the Reliques in 1765, whose object it was to win the favour of the public, at a period when the great difficulty was not how to secure the very words of old ballads, but how to arrest attention upon the subject at all. That great and important service to national literature would probably never have been attained without the work of Dr Percy; a work which first fixed the consideration of general readers on ancient poetry, and made it worth while to enquire how far its graces were really antique, or how far derived from the taste with which the publication had been superintended and revised. The object of Dr Percy was certainly intimated in several parts of his work, where he ingenuously acknowledges, that certain ballads have received emendations, and that others are not of pure and unmixed antiquity; that the be-

ginning of some and end of others have been supplied; and upon the whole, that he has, in many instances, decorated the ancient ballads with the graces of a more refined period.

This system is so distinctly intimated, that if there be any critic still of opinion, like poor Ritson, whose morbid temperament led him to such a conclusion, that the crime of literary imitation is equal to that of commercial forgery, he ought to recollect that guilt, in the latter case, does not exist without a corresponding charge of uttering the forged document, or causing it to be uttered, as genuine, without which the mere imitation is not culpable, at least not criminally so. This quality is totally awanting in the accusation so roughly brought against Dr Percy, who avowedly indulged in such alterations and improvements upon his materials, as might adapt them to the taste of an age not otherwise disposed to bestow its attention on them.

We have to add, that, in the fourth edition of the Reliques, Mr Thomas Percy of St John's

College, Oxford, pleading the cause of his uncle with the most gentlemanlike moderation, and with every respect to Mr Ritson's science and talents, has combated the critic's opinion without any attempt to retort his injurious language.

It would be now, no doubt, desirable to have had some more distinct account of Dr Percy's folio manuscript and its contents; and Mr Thomas Percy, accordingly, gives the original of the Marriage of Sir Gawain, and collates it with the copy published in a complete state by his uncle, who has on this occasion given entire rein to his own fancy, though the rude origin of most of his ideas is to be found in the old ballad. There is also given a copy of that elegant metrical tale, "The Child of Elle," as it exists in the folio manuscript, which goes far to show it has derived all its beauties from Dr Percy's poetical powers. Judging from these two specimens, we can easily conceive why the Reverend Editor of the "Reliques" should have declined, by the production of the folio manuscript, to furnish his severe Aristarch with weapons against him, which he was

sure would be unsparingly used. Yet it is certain, the manuscript contains much that is really excellent, though mutilated and sophisticated. A copy of the fine ballad of "Sir Caulin" is found in a Scottish shape, under the name of "King Malcolm and Sir Colvin," in Buchan's North Country Ballads, to be presently mentioned. It is, therefore, unquestionably ancient, though possibly retouched, and perhaps with the addition of a second part, of which the Scottish copy has no vestiges. It would be desirable to know exactly to what extent Dr Percy had used the license of an editor, in these and other cases; and certainly, at this period, would be only a degree of justice due to his memory.

On the whole, we may dismiss the "Reliques of Ancient Poetry" with the praise and censure conferred on it by a gentleman, himself a valuable labourer in the vineyard of antiquities. "It is the most elegant compilation of the early poetry that has ever appeared in any age or country. But it must be frankly added, that so numerous are the alterations and corrections, that the severe

antiquary, who desires to see the old English ballads in a genuine state, must consult a more accurate edition than this celebrated work."[1]

Of Ritson's own talents as an editor of ancient poetry, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. The first collector who followed the example of Dr Percy, was Mr T. Evans, bookseller, father of the gentleman we have just quoted. His "Old Ballads, historical and narrative, with some of modern date," appeared in two volumes, in 1777, and were eminently successful. In 1784, a second edition appeared, extending the work to four volumes. In this collection, many ballads found acceptance, which Bishop Percy had not considered as possessing sufficient merit to claim admittance into the Reliques. The 8vo Miscellany of 1723 yielded a great part of the materials. The collection of Evans contained several modern pieces of great merit, which are not to be found elsewhere, and which are understood to be the productions of William Julius Mickle, translator

[1] Introduction to Evans's Ballads, 1810. New edition, enlarged, &c.

of the Lusiad, though they were never claimed by him, nor received among his works. Amongst them is the elegiac poem of Cumnor Hall, which suggested the fictitious narrative entitled Kenilworth. The Red-Cross Knight, also by Mickle, which has furnished words for a beautiful glee, first occurred in the same collection. As Mickle, with a vein of great facility, united a power of verbal melody which might have been envied by bards of much greater renown,[1] he must

[1] In evidence of what is above stated, the author would quote the introductory stanza to a forgotten poem of Mickle, originally published under the injudicious and equivocal title of "The Concubine," but in subsequent editions called, "Sir Martyn, or The Progress of Dissipation."

"Awake, ye west winds, through the lonely dale,
And, Fancy, to thy faery bower betake;
Even now, with balmy sweetness breathes the gale,
Dimpling with downy wing the stilly lake;
Through the pale willows faltering whispers wake,
And evening comes with locks bedropp'd with dew;
On Desmond's mouldering turrets slowly shake
The wither'd ryegrass, and the hairbell blue,
And ever and anon sweet Mulla's plaints renew."

Mickle's facility of versification was so great, that, being a printer by profession, he frequently put his lines into

be considered as very successful in these efforts, if the ballads be regarded as avowedly modern. If they are to be judged of as accurate imitations of ancient poetry, they have less merit; the deception being only maintained by a huge store of double consonants, strewed at random into ordinary words, resembling the real fashion of antiquity as little as the niches, turrets, and tracery of plaster stuck upon a modern front. In the year 1810, the four volumes of 1784 were republished by Mr R. H. Evans, the son of the original editor, with very considerable alterations and additions. In this last edition, the more ordinary modern ballads were judiciously retrenched in number, and large and valuable additions made to the ancient part of the collection. Being in some measure a supplement to the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, this miscellany cannot be dispensed with on the shelves of any bibliomaniac who may choose

types without taking the trouble previously to put them into writing; thus uniting the composition of the author with the mechanical operation which typographers call by the same name.

to emulate Captain Cox of Coventry, the prototype of all collectors of popular poetry.

While Dr Percy was setting the example of a classical publication of ancient English poetry, the late David Herd was, in modest retirement, compiling a collection of Scottish Songs, which he has happily described as "the poetry and music of the heart." The first part of his Miscellany contains heroic and historical ballads, of which there is a respectable and well-chosen selection. Mr Herd,[1] an accountant, as the profession is called in Edinburgh, was known and generally esteemed for his shrewd, manly common sense and antiquarian science, mixed with much good-nature and great modesty. His hardy and antique mould of countenance, and his venerable grizzled locks, procured him, amongst his

[1] [David Herd was a native of St Cyrus, in Kincardineshire, and though often termed a *writer*, he was only a clerk in the office of Mr David Russell, accountant in Edinburgh. He died, aged 78, in 1810, and left a very curious library, which was dispersed by auction. Herd by no means merited the character, given him by Pinkerton, of "an illiterate and injudicious compiler."—ED.]

acquaintance, the name of Graysteil. His original collection of songs, in one volume, appeared in 1769; an enlarged one, in two volumes, came out in 1776. A publication of the same kind, being Herd's book still more enlarged, was printed for Lawrie and Symington in 1791. Some modern additions occur in this later work, of which by far the most valuable were two fine imitations of the Scottish ballad, by the gifted author of the "Man of Feeling,"—(now alas! no more,)—called "Duncan" and "Kenneth."

John Pinkerton, a man of considerable learning, and some severity as well as acuteness of disposition, was now endeavouring to force himself into public attention; and his collection of Select Ballads, London, 1783, contains sufficient evidence that he understood, in an extensive sense, Horace's maxim, *quidlibet audendi*. As he was possessed of considerable powers of poetry, though not equal to what he was willing to take credit for, he was resolved to enrich his collection with all the novelty and interest which it could derive from a liberal insertion of pieces

dressed in the garb of antiquity, but equipped from the wardrobe of the editor's imagination. With a boldness, suggested perhaps by the success of Mr Macpherson, he included, within a collection amounting to only twenty-one tragic ballads, no less than five, of which he afterwards owned himself to have been altogether, or in great part, the author. The most remarkable article in this Miscellany was, a second part to the noble ballad of Hardyknute, which has some good verses. It labours, however, under this great defect, that, in order to append his own conclusion to the original tale, Mr Pinkerton found himself under the necessity of altering a leading circumstance in the old ballad, which would have rendered his catastrophe inapplicable. With such license, to write continuations and conclusions would be no difficult task. In the second volume of the Select Ballads, consisting of comic pieces, a list of fifty-two articles contained nine written entirely by the editor himself. Of the manner in which these supposititious compositions are executed, it may be

briefly stated, that they are the work of a scholar much better acquainted with ancient books and manuscripts, than with oral tradition and popular legends. The poetry smells of the lamp; and it may be truly said, that if ever a ballad had existed in such quaint language as the author employs, it could never have been so popular as to be preserved by oral tradition. The glossary displays a much greater acquaintance with learned lexicons, than with the familiar dialect still spoken by the Lowland Scottish, and it is, of course, full of errors.[1] Neither was Mr Pinkerton more happy in the way of conjectural illustration. He chose to fix on Sir John Bruce of Kinross, the paternity of the ballad of Hardyknute, and of the fine poem called the Vision. The first is due to Mrs Halket of Wardlaw, the second to Allan Ramsay, although, it must be owned, it is of a character superior to his ordi-

[1] *Bansters*, for example, a word generally applied to the men, on a harvest field, who bind the sheaves, is derived from *ban*, to curse, and explained to mean, "blustering, swearing fellows."

nary poetry. Sir John Bruce was a brave, blunt soldier, who made no pretence whatever to literature, though his daughter, Mrs Bruce of Arnot, had much talent, a circumstance which may perhaps have misled the antiquary.

Mr Pinkerton read a sort of recantation, in a List of Scottish Poets, prefixed to a Selection of Poems from the Maitland Manuscript, vol. i. 1786, in which he acknowledges, as his own composition, the pieces of spurious antiquity included in his "Select Ballads," with a coolness which, when his subsequent invectives against others who had taken similar liberties is considered, infers as much audacity as the studied and laboured defence of obscenity with which he disgraced the same pages.

In the meantime, Joseph Ritson, a man of diligence and acumen equal to those of Pinkerton, but of the most laudable accuracy and fidelity as an editor, was engaged in various publications respecting poetical antiquities, in which he employed profound research. A select collection of English Songs was compiled by him,

with great care and considerable taste, and published at London, 1783. A new edition of this has appeared since Ritson's death, sanctioned by the name of the learned and indefatigable antiquary, Thomas Park, and augmented with many original pieces, and some which Ritson had prepared for publication.

Ritson's Collection of Songs was followed by a curious volume, entitled, "Ancient Songs from the time of Henry III. to the Revolution," 1790; "Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry," 1792; and "A collection of Scottish Songs, with the genuine music," London 1794. This last is a genuine, but rather meagre collection of Caledonian popular songs. Next year Mr Ritson published "Robin Hood," 2 vols. 1795, being "A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads now extant, relative to that celebrated Outlaw." This work is a notable illustration of the excellences and defects of Mr Ritson's system. It is almost impossible to conceive so much zeal, research, and industry bestowed on a subject of antiquity. There scarcely

occurs a phrase or word relating to Robin Hood, whether in history or poetry, in law books, in ancient proverbs, or common parlance, but it is here collected and explained. At the same time, the extreme fidelity of the editor seems driven to excess, when we find him pertinaciously retaining all the numerous and gross errors which repeated recitations have introduced into the text, and regarding it as a sacred duty to prefer the worst to the better readings, as if their inferiority was a security for their being genuine. In short, when Ritson copied from rare books, or ancient manuscripts, there could not be a more accurate editor; when taken his authority from oral tradition, and judging between two recited copies, he was apt to consider the worst as most genuine, as if a poem was not more likely to be deteriorated than improved by passing through the mouths of many reciters. In the Ballads of Robin Hood, this superstitious scrupulosity was especially to be regretted, as it tended to enlarge the collection with a great number of doggerel compositions, which are all copies of each other,

turning on the same idea of Bold Robin meeting with a shepherd, a tinker, a mendicant, a tanner, &c. &c., by each and all of whom he is soundly thrashed, and all of whom he receives into his band. The tradition, which avers that it was the brave outlaw's custom to try a bout at quarter-staff with his young recruits, might indeed have authorized one or two such tales, but the greater part ought to have been rejected as modern imitations of the most paltry kind, composed probably about the age of James I. of England. By adopting this spurious trash as part of Robin Hood's history, he is represented as the best cudgelled hero, Don Quixote excepted, that ever was celebrated in prose or rhyme. Ritson also published several garlands of North Country songs.

Looking on this eminent antiquary's labours in a general point of view, we may deprecate the eagerness and severity of his prejudices, and feel surprise that he should have shown so much irritability of disposition on such a topic as a collection of old ballads, which certainly have

little in them to affect the passions; and we may be sometimes provoked at the pertinacity with which he has preferred bad readings to good. But while industry, research, and antiquarian learning, are recommendations to works of this nature, few editors will ever be found so competent to the task as Joseph Ritson. It must also be added to his praise, that although not willing to yield his opinion rashly, yet if he saw reason to believe that he had been mistaken in any fact or argument, he resigned his own opinion with a candour equal to the warmth with which he defended himself while confident he was in the right. Many of his works are now almost out of print, and an edition of them in common orthography, and altering the bizarre spelling and character which his prejudices induced the author to adopt, would be, to antiquaries, an acceptable present.

We have now given a hasty account of various collections of popular poetry during the eighteenth century; we have only further to observe, that, in the present century, this species of lore

has been sedulously cultivated. The present Collection first appeared in 1802, in two volumes: and what may appear a singular coincidence, it was the first work printed by Mr James Ballantyne, (then residing at Kelso,) as it was the first serious demand which the present author made on the patience of the public. The Border Minstrelsy, augmented by a third volume, came to a second edition in 1803. In 1803, Mr John Grahame Dalzell, to whom his country is obliged for his antiquarian labours, published "Scottish Poems of the Sixteenth Century," which, among other subjects of interest, contains a curious contemporary ballad of Belrinnes, which, has some stanzas of considerable merit.[1]

The year 1806 was distinguished by the appearance of "Popular Ballads and Songs, from

[1] The first opening of the ballad has much of the martial strain with which a pibroch commences. *Properat in medias res*—according to the classical admonition.

"MacCallaunmore came from the west
With many a bow and brand;
To waste the Rinnes he thought it best,
The Earl of Huntly's land."

Traditions, Manuscripts, and Scarce Editions, with Translations of Similar Pieces from the Ancient Danish Language, and a few Originals by the Editor, Robert Jamieson, A.M., and F.A.S."[1] This work, which was not greeted by the public with the attention it deserved, opened a new discovery respecting the original source of

[1] [After the completion of the Border Minstrelsy, and nearly three years previous to the publication of his own Collection, Mr Jamieson printed in the Scots Magazine, (October 1803,) a List of *desiderata* in Scottish Song. His communication to the Editor of that work contains the following paragraph:—"I am now *writing out for the press* a Collection of popular Ballads and Songs from tradition, MSS., and scarce publications, with a few of modern date, which have been written for, and are exclusively dedicated to my collection. As many of the pieces were common property, I have heretofore waited for the completion of Mr Walter Scott's Work, with more anxiety for the cause in general, than for any particular and selfish interest of my own; as I was sure of having the satisfaction of seeing such pieces as that gentleman might choose to adopt, appear with every advantage which I, partial as I was, could wish them. The most sanguine expectations of the public have now been amply gratified; and much curious and valuable matter is still left for me by Mr Scott, to whom I am much indebted for many acts of friendship, and much liberality and good will shewn towards me and my undertaking."—Ed.]

the Scottish ballads. Mr Jamieson's extensive acquaintance with the Scandinavian literature enabled him to detect not only a general similarity betwixt these and the Danish ballads preserved in the "Kiempe Viser," an early collection of heroic ballads in that language, but to demonstrate that, in many cases, the stories and songs were distinctly the same, a circumstance which no antiquary had hitherto so much as suspected. Mr Jamieson's annotations are also very valuable, and preserve some curious illustrations of the old poets. His imitations, though he is not entirely free from the affectation of using rather too many obsolete words, are generally highly interesting. The work fills an important place in the collections of those who are addicted to this branch of antiquarian study.

Mr John Finlay, a poet whose career was cut short by a premature death,[1] published a short

[1] [Mr Finlay, best known by his "Wallace, or The Vale of Ellerslie," died in 1810, in his twenty-eighth year. An affectionate and elegant tribute to his memory from the pen of Professor Wilson appeared in Blackwood's Magazine, November 1817.—Ed.]

collection of "Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads," in 1808. The beauty of some imitations of the old Scottish ballad, with the good sense, learning, and modesty of the preliminary dissertations, must make all admirers of ancient lore regret the early loss of this accomplished young man.

Various valuable collections of ancient ballad-poetry have appeared of late years, some of which are illustrated with learning and acuteness, as those of Mr Motherwell[1] and of Mr Kinloch[2] intimate much taste and feeling for this species of literature. Nor is there any want of editions of ballads, less designed for public sale, than to preserve floating pieces of minstrelsy which are in immediate danger of perishing. Several of

[1] [Minstrelsy; Ancient and Modern, with an Historical Introduction and Notes. By William Motherwell. 4to. Glasg. 1827.]

[2] [Ancient Scottish Ballads, recovered from Tradition, and never before published; with Notes, Historical and Explanatory, and an Appendix, containing the Airs of several of the ballads. 8vo. Edin. 1827.]

those, edited, as we have occasion to know, by men of distinguished talent, have appeared in a smaller form and more limited edition, and must soon be among the *introuvables* of Scottish typography. We would particularize a duodecimo, under the modest title of a "Ballad Book," without place or date annexed, which indicates, by a few notes only, the capacity which the editor possesses for supplying the most extensive and ingenious illustrations upon antiquarian subjects. Most of the ballads are of a comic character, and some of them admirable specimens of Scottish dry humour. Another collection which calls for particular distinction, is in the same size, or nearly so, and bears the same title with the preceding one, the date being Edinburgh, 1827.[1] But the contents are announced as containing the budget, or stock-in-trade, of an old Aberdeenshire minstrel, the very last, probably, of the race, who, according to Percy's definition of the profession.

[1] [This is Mr C. K. Sharpe's Work, already alluded to.—ED.]

sung his own compositions, and those of others, through the capital of the county, and other towns in that country of gentlemen. This man's name was Charles Leslie, but he was known more generally by the nickname of Mussel-mou'd Charlie, from a singular projection of his under lip. His death was thus announced in the newspapers for October 1792:—"Died at Old Rain, in Aberdeenshire, aged one hundred and four years, Charles Leslie, a hawker, or ballad-singer, well known in that country by the name of Mussel-mou'd Charlie. He followed his occupation till within a few weeks of his death." Charlie was a devoted Jacobite, and so popular in Aberdeen, that he enjoyed in that city a sort of monopoly of the minstrel calling, no other person being allowed, under any pretence, to chant ballads on the causeway, or plain-stanes, of "the brave burgh." Like the former collection, most of Mussel-mou'd Charlie's songs were of a jocose character.

But the most extensive and valuable additions which have been of late made to this branch of

ancient literature, are the collections of Mr Peter Buchan of Peterhead, a person of indefatigable research in that department, and whose industry has been crowned with the most successful results. This is partly owing to the country where Mr Buchan resides, which, full as it is of minstrel relics, has been but little ransacked by any former collectors; so that, while it is a very rare event south of the Tay, to recover any ballad having a claim to antiquity, which has not been examined and republished in some one or other of our collections of ancient poetry, those of Aberdeenshire have been comparatively little attended to. The present Editor was the first to solicit attention to these northern songs, in consequence of a collection of ballads communicated to him by his late respected friend, Lord Woodhouslee. Mr Jamieson, in his collections of "Songs and Ballads," being himself a native of Morayshire, was able to push this enquiry much farther, and at the same time, by doing so, to illustrate his theory of the connexion between the ancient Scottish and Danish ballads, upon which the pub-

lication of Mr Buchan throws much light. It is, indeed, the most complete collection of the kind which has yet appeared.[1]

Of the originality of the ballads in Mr Buchan's collection we do not entertain the slightest doubt. Several (we may instance the curious tale of "The Two Magicians") are translated from the Norse, and Mr Buchan is probably unacquainted with the originals. Others refer to points of history, with which the editor does not seem to be familiar. It is out of no disrespect to this laborious and useful antiquary, that we observe his prose composition is rather florid, and forms, in this respect a strong contrast to the extreme simplicity of the ballads, which gives us the most distinct assurance that he has delivered the latter to the public in the shape in which he found them. Accordingly, we have never seen any collection of Scottish poetry appearing, from internal evidence, so decidedly and indubitably original.

[1] [Ancient Ballads and Songs of the North of Scotland, hitherto unpublished; with Explanatory Notes. By P. B. 2 vols. 8vo. Edin. 1828.]

It is perhaps a pity that Mr Buchan did not remove some obvious errors and corruptions; but, in truth, though their remaining on record is an injury to the effect of the ballads, in point of composition, it is, in some degree, a proof of their authenticity. Besides, although the exertion of this editorial privilege, of selecting readings, is an advantage to the ballads themselves, we are contented rather to take the whole in their present, though imperfect state, than that the least doubt should be thrown upon them, by amendments or alterations, which might render their authenticity doubtful. The historical poems, we observe, are few and of no remote date. That of the "Bridge of Dee," is among the oldest, and there are others referring to the times of the Covenanters. Some, indeed, are composed on still more recent events; as the marriage of the mother of the late illustrious Byron,[1] and a catastrophe of still later occurrence, "The Death of Leith-Hall."

[1] [This song is quoted in Moore's Life of Byron, vol. i.—Ed.]

As we wish to interest the admirers of ancient minstrel lore in this curious collection, we shall only add, that, on occasion of a new edition, we would recommend to Mr Buchan to leave out a number of songs which he has only inserted because they are varied, sometimes for the worse, from sets which have appeared in other publications. This restriction would make considerable room for such as, old though they be, possess to this age all the grace of novelty.

To these notices of late collections of Scottish Ballads, we ought to add some remarks on the very curious "Ancient Legendary Tales, printed chiefly from Original Sources, edited by the Rev. Charles Henry Hartshorne, M.A. 1829." The editor of this unostentatious work has done his duty to the public with much labour and care. and made the admirers of this species of poetry acquainted with very many ancient legendary poems, which were hitherto unpublished and very little known. It increases the value of the collection, that many of them are of a comic turn,

a species of composition more rare, and, from its necessary allusion to domestic manners, more curious and interesting, than the serious class of Romances.

We have thus, in a cursory manner, gone through the history of English and Scottish popular poetry, and noticed the principal collections which have been formed from time to time of such compositions, and the principles on which the editors have proceeded. It is manifest that of late, the public attention has been so much turned to the subject by men of research and talent, that we may well hope to retrieve from oblivion as much of our ancient poetry as there is now any possibility of recovering.

Another important part of our task consists in giving some account of the modern imitation of the English Ballad, a species of literary labour

which the author has himself pursued with some success. Our remarks on this species of composition are prefixed to the fourth volume of the present edition.

ABBOTSFORD,
1*st March*, 1830.

MINSTRELSY

OF THE

SCOTTISH BORDER:

CONSISTING OF

HISTORICAL AND ROMANTIC BALLADS,

COLLECTED

IN THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES OF SCOTLAND; WITH A FEW OF MODERN DATE, FOUNDED UPON LOCAL TRADITION.

The songs, to savage virtue dear,
That won of yore the public ear,
Ere polity, sedate and sage,
Had quench'd the fires of feudal rage.

WARTON.

TO

HIS GRACE HENRY,

DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, &c. &c. &c.

These Tales,

WHICH

IN ELDER TIMES HAVE CELEBRATED THE PROWESS,

AND CHEERED THE HALLS,

OF

HIS GALLANT ANCESTORS,

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS GRACE'S MUCH OBLIGED

AND

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

WALTER SCOTT.[1]

[1 Edinburgh, 1802.]

INTRODUCTION.

[EDIN. 1802.]

FROM the remote period, when the Roman Province was contracted by the ramparts of Severus, until the union of the Kingdoms, the Borders of Scotland formed the stage, upon which were presented the most memorable conflicts of two gallant nations. The inhabitants, at the commencement of this era, formed the first wave of the torrent, which assaulted, and finally overwhelmed, the barriers of the Roman power in Britain. The subsequent events, in which they were engaged, tended little to diminish their military hardihood, or to reconcile them to a more civilized state of society. We have no occasion to trace the state of the Borders during the long

and obscure period of Scottish history, which preceded the accession of the Stuart family. To illustrate a few ballads, the earliest of which is hardly coeval with James V., such an enquiry would be equally difficult and vain. If we may trust the Welsh bards, in their account of the wars betwixt the Saxons and Danes of Deira and the Cumraig, imagination can hardly form any idea of conflicts more desperate, than were maintained, on the Borders, between the ancient British and their Teutonic invaders. Thus, the Gododin[1] describes the waste and devastation of mutual havoc, in colours so glowing, as strongly to recall the words of Tacitus; "*Et ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*"

At a later period, the Saxon families who fled from the exterminating sword of the Conqueror,

[1] In the spirited translation of this poem, by Jones, the following verses are highly descriptive of the exhausted state of the victor army:—

At Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
With rapid clangour hurried far:
Each echoing dell the note resounds—
But when return the sons of war!
Thou, born of stern Necessity,
Dull Peace! the desert yield's to thee,
And owns thy melancholy sway.

with many of the Normans themselves, whom discontent and intestine feuds had driven into exile, began to rise into eminence upon the Scottish Borders. They brought with them arts, both of peace and of war, unknown in Scotland; and, among their descendants, we soon number the most powerful Border chiefs. Such, during the reign of the last Alexander, were Patrick Earl of March, and Lord Soulis, renowned in tra- 1249
dition; and such were also the powerful Comyns, who early acquired the principal sway upon the Scottish Marches. In the civil wars be- 1300
twixt Bruce and Baliol, all those powerful chieftains espoused the unsuccessful party. They were forfeited and exiled; and upon their ruins was founded the formidable house of Douglas. The Borders, from sea to sea, were now at the devotion of a succession of mighty chiefs, whose exorbitant power threatened to place a new dynasty upon the Scottish throne. It is not my intention to trace the dazzling career of this race of heroes, whose exploits were alike formidable to the English and to their own sovereign.

The sun of Douglas set in blood. The murders of the sixth Earl, and his brother, in the

Castle of Edinburgh, were followed by that of their successor poniarded at Stirling by the hand of his prince. His brother, Earl James, appears neither to have possessed the abilities nor the ambition of his ancestors. He drew, indeed, against his Sovereign, the formidable sword of Douglas, but with a timid and hesitating hand. Procrastination ruined his cause; and he was deserted, at Abercorn, by the Knight of Cadyow, chief of the Hamiltons, and by his most active adherents, after they had ineffectually exhorted him to commit his fate to the issue of a battle. The
1453 Border chiefs, who longed for independence, showed little inclination to follow the declining fortunes of Douglas. On the contrary, the
1455 most powerful class engaged and defeated him at Arkinholme, in Annandale, when, after a short residence in England, he again endeavoured to gain a footing in his native country.[1] The

[1] At the battle of Arkinholme, the Earl of Angus, a near kinsman of Douglas, commanded the royal forces; and the difference of their complexion occasioned the saying, "that the *Black Douglas* had put down the *Red*." The Maxwells, the Johnstones, and the Scotts, composed his army. Archibald, Earl of Murray, brother to Douglas, was slain in the action; and Hugh, Earl of Ormond, his

spoils of Douglas were liberally distributed among his conquerors, and royal grants of his forfeited

second brother, was taken and executed. His captors, Lord Carlisle, and the Baron of Johnstone, were rewarded with a grant of the lands of Pittinane, upon Clyde.—GODSCROFT, vol. i. p. 375.—BALFOUR'S *MS. in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.*—ABERCROMBIE'S *Achievements*, vol. ii. p. 361, *folio edition.*—The other chiefs were also distinguished by royal favour. By a charter, upon record, dated 25th February 1548, the king grants to Walter Scott of Kirkurd, ancestor of the house of Buccleuch, the lands of Abingtown, Phareholm, and Glentonan Craig, in Lanarkshire, "*Pro suo fideli servitio nobis impenso, et pro quod interfuit in conflictu de Arkinholme in occisione et captione nostrorum rebellium quondam Archibaldi et Hugonis de Douglas olim Comitum Moraviæ et de Ormond et aliorum rebellium nostrorum in eorum comitiva existen: ibidem captorum et interfectorum.*" Similar grants of land were made to Finnart and Arran, the two branches of the house of Hamilton; to the chief of the Battisons; but above all to the Earl of Angus, who obtained from royal favour a donation of the Lordship of Douglas, and many other lands now held by Lord Douglas, as his representative. There appears, however, to be some doubt, whether, in this division, the Earl of Angus received more than his natural right. Our historians, indeed, say, that William, 1st Earl of Douglas, had three sons: 1. James the 2d Earl, who died in the field of Otterburn; 2. Archibald the Grim, 3d Earl; and 3. George, in right of his mother, Earl of Angus. Whether, however, this Archibald was actually the son of William, seems very doubt-

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domains effectually interested them in excluding his return. An attempt on the East Borders by
1475 *"the Percy and the Douglas both together,"* was equally unsuccessful. The Earl, grown old in exile, longed once more to see his native country, and vowed that, upon Saint Magdalen's
1483 day, he would deposit his offering on the high altar at Lochmaben. Accompanied by the banished Earl of Albany, with his usual fortune, he entered Scotland. The Borderers assembled to oppose him, and he suffered a final defeat at Burnswark, in Dumfries-shire. The aged Earl was taken in the fight, by a son of Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, one of his own vassals. A grant

ful; and Sir David Dalrymple has strenuously maintained the contrary. Now, if Archibald the Grim intruded into the Earldom of Douglas, without being a son of that family, it follows that the house of Angus, being kept out of their just rights for more than a century, were only restored to them after the battle of Arkinholme. Perhaps this may help to account for the eager interest taken by the Earl of Angus against his kinsman.1—*See Remarks on the History of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1773, p. 121.

1 [The connection between the house of Angus and the old line of Douglas has at length, it is believed, been settled by the researches of the learned John Riddell. The first Douglas of Angus was, according to this authority, a natural son of the first Earl of Douglas.—ED.]

of lands had been offered for his person: "Carry me to the King!" said Douglas to Kirkpatrick: "thou art well entitled to profit by my misfortune; for thou wast true to me, while I was true to myself." The young man wept bitterly, and offered to fly with the Earl into England. But Douglas, weary of exile, refused his proffered liberty, and only requested, that Kirkpatrick would not deliver him to the King, till he had secured his own reward.[1] Kirkpatrick did more: he stipulated for the personal safety of his old master. His generous intercession prevailed; and the last of the Douglasses was permitted to die. in monastic seclusion, in the Abbey of Lindores.

After the fall of the house of Douglas, no one chieftain appears to have enjoyed the same extensive supremacy over the Scottish Borders. The various barons, who had partaken of the spoil, combined in resisting a succession of uncontrolled domination. The Earl of Angus alone seems to have taken rapid steps in the same course of am-

[1] A grant of the King, dated 2d October 1484, bestowed upon Kirkpatrick, for this acceptable service, the lands of Kirkmichael.

bition, which had been pursued by his kinsmen, and rivals, the Earls of Douglas. Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus, called *Bell-the-Cat*, was, at once, Warden of the East and Middle Marches, Lord of Liddesdale, and Jedwood forest, and possessed of the strong castles of Douglas, Hermitage, and Tantallon. Highly esteemed by the ancient nobility, a faction which he headed shook the throne of the feeble James III., whose person they restrained, and whose minions they led to an ignominious death. The King failed not to show his sense of these insults, though unable effectually to avenge them. This hastened his fate: and the field of Bannockburn, once the scene of a more glorious conflict, beheld the combined chieftains of the Border counties arrayed against their sovereign, under the banners of his own son. The King was supported by almost all the barons of the north; but the tumultuous ranks of the Highlanders were ill able to endure the steady and rapid charge of the men of Annandale and Liddesdale, who bare spears two ells longer than were used by the rest of their countrymen. The yells with which they accompanied their onset, caused the heart of James to quail within him. He deserted his host,

and fled towards Stirling; but falling from his horse, he was murdered by the pursuers. 1488

James IV., a monarch of a vigorous and energetic character, was well aware of the danger which his ancestors had experienced from the preponderance of one overgrown family. He is supposed to have smiled internally, when the Border and Highland champions bled and died in the savage sports of chivalry, by which his nuptials were solemnized. Upon the waxing power of Angus he kept a wary eye; and, embracing the occasion of a casual slaughter, he compelled that Earl and his son to exchange the lordship of Liddesdale, and the castle of Hermitage, for the castle and lordship of Bothwell.[1] By this policy he prevented the house of Angus, mighty as it was,

[1] Spens of Kilspindie, a renowned cavalier, had been present in Court, when the Earl of Angus was highly praised for strength and valour. "It may be," answered Spens, "if all be good that is upcome;" insinuating that the courage of the Earl might not answer the promise of his person. Shortly after, Angus, while hawking near Borthwick, with a single attendant, met Kilspindie. "What reason had ye," said the Earl, "for making question of my manhood? thou art a tall fellow, and so am I; and by St Bride of Douglas, one of us shall pay for it!"—"Since it may be no better," answered Kilspindie, "I will defend myself against the best earl in Scotland." With these words they

from rising to the height whence the elder branch of their family had been hurled.

Nor did James fail in affording his subjects on the Marches marks of his royal justice and protec-
1510 tion. The clan of Turnbull having been guilty of unbounded excesses, the king came suddenly to Jedburgh, by a night march, and executed the most rigid justice upon the astonished offenders. Their submission was made with singular solemnity. Two hundred of the tribe met the King, at the water of Rule, holding in their hands the naked swords with which they had perpetrated their crimes, and having

encountered fiercely, till Angus, with one blow, severed the thigh of his antagonist, who died upon the spot. The Earl then addressed the attendant of Kilspindie: "Go thy way: tell my gossip, the King, that here was nothing but fair play. I know my gossip will be offended; but I will get me into Liddesdale, and remain in my castle of the Hermitage till his anger be abated."—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 59. The price of the Earl's pardon seems to have been the exchange mentioned in the text. Bothwell is now the residence of Lord Douglas. The sword with which Archibald *Bell-the-Cat* slew Spens, was, by his descendant, the famous Earl of Morton, presented to Lord Lindesay of the Byres, when about to engage in single combat with the noted Earl of Bothwell, at Carberry-hill.—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 175.

each around his neck the halter which he had well merited. A few were capitally punished, many imprisoned, and the rest dismissed, after they had given hostages for their future peaceable demeanour.[1]

The hopes of Scotland, excited by the prudent and spirited conduct of James, were doomed to a sudden and fatal reverse. Why should we recapitulate the painful tale, of the defeat and death of a high-spirited prince? Prudence, policy, the prodigies of superstition, and the advice of his most experienced counsellors, were alike unable to subdue in James the blazing zeal of romantic chivalry. The monarch, and the flower of his nobles, precipitately rushed to the fatal field of Flodden, whence they were never to return. 1513

The minority of James V. presents a melancholy scene. Scotland, through all its extent, felt the truth of the adage, that "the country is hapless, whose prince is a child." But the Border counties, exposed from their situation to the incursions of the English, deprived of many of their most gallant chiefs, and harassed by the

[1] Holingshed's *Chronicle*.—LESLY.

intestine struggles of the survivors, were reduced to a wilderness, inhabited only by the beasts of the field, and by a few more brutal warriors. Lord Home, the chamberlain and favourite of James IV., leagued with the Earl of Angus, who married the widow of his sovereign, held, for a time, the chief sway upon the East Border. Albany, the Regent of the kingdom, bred in the French court, and more accustomed to wield the pen than the sword, feebly endeavoured to control a lawless nobility, to whom his manners appeared strange, and his person despicable. It was in vain that he inveigled the Lord Home to Edinburgh, where he was tried and executed. This example of justice, or severity, only irritated the kinsmen and followers of the deceased baron: for though, in other respects, not more sanguinary than the rest of a barbarous nation, the Borderers never dismissed from their memory a deadly feud, till blood for blood had been exacted to the uttermost drachm.[1] Of this, 1516

The statute 1594, cap. 231, ascribes the disorders on the Border in a great measure to the "counselles, directions, receipt, and partaking, of chieftains principalles of the branches, and househalders of the saids surnames, and

the fate of Anthony d'Arcey, Seigneur de la Bastie, affords a melancholy example. This gallant French cavalier was appointed Warden of the East Marches by Albany, at his first disgraceful retreat to France. Though De la Bastie was an able statesman, and a true son of chivalry, the choice of the regent was nevertheless unhappy. The new warden was a foreigner, placed in the office of Lord Home, as the delegate of the very man who had brought 1517
that baron to the scaffold. A stratagem, contrived by Home of Wedderburn, who burned to avenge the death of his chief, drew De la Bastie towards Langton in the Merse. Here he found himself surrounded by his enemies. In attempting, by the speed of his horse, to gain the castle of Dunbar, the warden plunged into a morass, where he was overtaken, and cruelly butchered. Wedderburn himself cut off his head; and, in savage triumph, knitted it to his saddle-bow by the long flowing hair, which had been admired by the dames of France.—PITSCOTTIE, *edit.* 1728, p.

clannes, quhilkis bears quarrel, and seeks revenge for the least hurting or slauchter of ony ane of their unhappy race, although it were ordour of justice, or in rescuing and following of true mens geares stollen or reft."

130. PINKERTON'S *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 169.[1]

The Earl of Arran, head of the house of Hamilton, was appointed to succeed De la Bastie in his perilous office. But the Douglasses, the Homes, and the Kerrs, proved too strong for him upon the Border. He was routed by those
1520 clans, at Kelso, and afterwards in a sharp skirmish, fought betwixt his faction and that of Angus, in the High Street of the metropolis.[2]

[1] This tragedy, or, perhaps, the preceding execution of Lord Home, must have been the subject of a song, the first two lines of which are preserved in the *Complaynt of Scotland*—

> God sen' the Duc hed byddin in France,
> And De la Bate had never come hame.
> P. 100, Edin. 1801.

[2] The particulars of this encounter are interesting. The Hamiltons were the most numerous party, drawn chiefly from the western counties. Their leaders met in the palace of Archbishop Beaton, and resolved to apprehend Angus, who was come to the city to attend the Convention of Estates. Gawin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, a near relation of Angus, in vain endeavoured to mediate betwixt the factions. He appealed to Beaton, and invoked his assistance to prevent bloodshed. "On my conscience," answered the Archbishop, "I cannot help what is to happen." As he laid his hand upon his breast, at this solemn

The return of the Regent was followed by the banishment of Angus, and by a desultory warfare with England, carried on with mutual incursions. Two gallant armies, levied by Albany, were dismissed without any exploit worthy notice,

declaration, the hauberk, concealed by his rochet, was heard to clatter: "Ah! my lord!" retorted Douglas, "your conscience sounds hollow." He then expostulated with the secular leaders, and Sir Patrick Hamilton, brother to Arran, was convinced by his remonstrances; but Sir James, the natural son of the Earl, upbraided his uncle with reluctance to fight. "False bastard!" answered Sir Patrick, "I will fight to-day where thou darest not be seen." With these words they rushed tumultuously towards the High Street, where Angus, with the Prior of Coldinghame, and the redoubted Wedderburn, waited their assault, at the head of 400 spearmen, the flower of the East Marches, who, having broke down the gate of the Netherbow, had arrived just in time to the Earl's assistance. The advantage of the ground, and the disorder of the Hamiltons, soon gave the day to Angus. Sir Patrick Hamilton, and the Master of Montgomery, were slain. Arran, and Sir James Hamilton, escaped with difficulty; and with no less difficulty was the military prelate of Glasgow rescued from the ferocious Borderers, by the generous interposition of Gawin Douglas. The skirmish was long remembered in Edinburgh, by the name of "Cleanse the Causeway." —PINKERTON'S *History*, vol. ii. p. 181.—PITSCOTTIE, *Edit.* 1728, p. 120.—*Life of Gawain Douglas, prefixed to his Virgil.*

while Surrey, at the head of ten thousand cavalry, burnt Jedburgh, and laid waste all Tiviotdale. This general pays a splendid tribute to the gallantry of the Border chiefs. He terms them,

1523 "The boldest men and the hottest, that ever I saw in any nation."[1]

Disgraced and detested, Albany bade adieu to Scotland for ever. The Queen-mother and the Earl of Arran for some time swayed the kingdom. But their power was despised on the Borders, where Angus, though banished, had many friends. Scott of Buccleuch even appropriated to himself domains belonging to the Queen, worth 400 merks yearly; being probably the castle of Newark, and her jointure lands in Ettrick forest.[2] —This chief, with Kerr of Cessford, was com-

[1] A curious letter from Surrey to the King is printed in the Appendix, No. I.

[2] In a letter to the Duke of Norfolk, October 1524, Queen Margaret says, "Sen that the Lard of Sessford and the Lard of Baclw vas put in the Castell of Edinbrouh, the Erl of Lenness hath past hyz vay vythout lycyens, and in despyt; and thynkyth to make the brek that he may, and to solyst other lordis to tak hyz part; for the said Lard of Bavklw vas hyz man, and dyd the gretyst ewelyz that myght be dwn, and twk part playnly vyth theffyz as is well known."—*Cot. MSS. Calig.* B. I.

mitted to ward, from which they escaped, to join the party of the exiled Angus. Leagued with these, and other Border chiefs, Angus effected his return to Scotland, where he shortly after acquired possession of the supreme power, and of the person of the youthful King. "The ancient power of the Douglasses," says the accurate historian whom I have so often referred to, "seemed to have revived; and, after a slumber of near a century, again to threaten destruction to the Scottish monarchy."—PINKERTON, vol. ii. p. 277. 1525

In fact, the time now returned, when no one durst strive with a Douglas, or with his followers. For, although Angus used the outward pageant of conducting the King around the country, for punishing thieves and traitors, "yet," says Pitscottie, "none were found greater than were in his own company." The high spirit of the young King was galled by the ignominious restraint under which he found himself; and, in a progress to the Border, for repressing the Armstrongs, he probably gave such signs of dissatisfaction, as excited the Laird of Buccleuch to attempt his rescue.

This powerful baron was the chief of a hardy clan, inhabiting Ettrick forest, Eskdale, Ewsdale, the higher part of Tiviotdale, and a portion of Liddesdale. In this warlike district he easily levied a thousand horse, comprehending a large body of Elliots, Armstrongs, and other broken clans, over whom the Laird of Buccleuch exercised an extensive authority; being termed, by Lord Dacre, "chief maintainer of all misguided men on the Borders of Scotland."—*Letter to Wolsey*, July 18, 1528. The Earl of Angus, with his reluctant ward, had slept at Melrose; and the clans of Home and Kerr, under the Lord Home, and the barons of Cessford and Fairnihirst, had taken their leave of the King, when, in the grey of the morning, Buccleuch and his band of cavalry were discovered hanging, like a thunder-cloud, upon the neighbouring hill of Haliden.[1] A herald was sent to demand his purpose, and to charge him to retire. To the first 1526

[1] Near Darnick. By a corruption from Skirmish-field, the spot is called the Skinnersfield. Two lines of an old ballad on the subject are still preserved:

"There were sic belts and blows,
The Mattous burn ran blood."

[Another part of the field is still called the *Charge Law*.—Ed.]

point he answered, that he came to show his clan to the King, according to the custom of the Borders; to the second, that he knew the King's mind better than Angus.—When this haughty answer was reported to the Earl, "Sir," said he to the King, "yonder is Buccleuch, with the thieves of Annandale and Liddesdale, to bar your grace's passage. I vow to God they shall either fight or flee. Your grace shall tarry on this hillock with my brother George; and I will either clear your road of yonder banditti, or die in the attempt." The Earl, with these words, alighted, and hastened to the charge; while the Earl of Lennox (at whose instigation Buccleuch made the attempt) remained with the King, an inactive spectator. Buccleuch and his followers likewise dismounted, and received the assailants with a dreadful shout, and a shower of lances. The encounter was fierce and obstinate; but the Homes and Kerrs, returning at the noise of the battle, bore down and dispersed the left wing of Buccleuch's little army. The hired banditti fled on all sides; but the chief himself, surrounded by his clan, fought desperately in the retreat. The Laird of Cessford, chief of the Roxburgh Kerrs,

pursued the chase fiercely; till, at the bottom of a steep path, Elliot of Stobs, a follower of Buccleuch, turned, and slew him with a stroke of his lance. When Cessford fell, the pursuit ceased.[1] But his death, with those of Buccleuch's friends, who fell in the action, to the number of eighty, occasioned a deadly feud betwixt the names of Scott and Kerr, which cost much blood upon the Marches.[2]—See PITSCOTTIE, LESLY, and GODSCROFT.

1528 Stratagem at length effected what force had been unable to accomplish; and the King, emancipated from the iron tutelage of Angus, made the first use of his authority, by

[1] [Sir Walter Scott lived to be proprietor of the ground on which this battle was fought; and a stone seat, on the edge of Kaeside, about half a mile above the house of Abbotsford, marks the spot, called "Turnagain," where Stobbs halted, and Cessford died.—ED.]

[2] Buccleuch contrived to escape forfeiture, a doom pronounced against those nobles who assisted the Earl of Lennox in a subsequent attempt to deliver the King, by force of arms. "The laird of Bukcleugh has a respecte, and is not forfeited; and will get his pece, and was in Lethquo, both Sondaye, Mondaye, and Tewisday last, which is grete displeasure to the Carres."—*Letter from Sir C. Dacre to Lord Dacre, 2d December* 1526.

banishing from the kingdom his late lieutenant, and the whole race of Douglas. This command was not enforced without difficulty; for the power of Angus was strongly rooted in the East Border, where he possessed the castle of Tantallon, and the hearts of the Homes and Kerrs. The former, whose strength was proverbial,[1] defied a royal army; and the latter, at the Pass of Pease, baffled the Earl of Argyle's attempts to enter the Merse, as lieutenant of his sovereign. On this occasion, the Borderers regarded with wonder and contempt the barbarous array and rude equipage of their northern countrymen. Godscroft has preserved the beginning of a scoffing rhyme, made upon this occasion:—

The Earl of Argyle is bound to ride
From the border of Edgebucklin brae;[2]
And all his habergeons him beside,
Each man upon a sonk of strae.—

They made their vow that they would slay...

* * * * *

GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 104, Edit. 1743.

[1] "To ding down Tantallon, and make a bridge to the Bass," was an adage expressive of impossibility. The shattered ruins of this celebrated fortress still overhang a tremendous rock on the coast of East Lothian.

[2] Edgebucklin, near Musselburgh.

The pertinacious opposition of Angus to his doom irritated to the extreme the fiery temper of James, and he swore, in his wrath, that a Douglas should never serve him; an oath which he kept in circumstances, under which the spirit of chivalry which he worshipped[1] should have taught him other feelings.

[1] I allude to the affecting story of Douglas of Kilspindie, uncle to the Earl of Angus. This gentleman had been placed by Angus about the King's person, who, when a boy, loved him much on account of his singular activity of body, and was wont to call him his *Graysteil*, after a champion of chivalry, in the romance of *Sir Eger and Sir Grime*. He shared, however, the fate of his chief, and for many years served in France. Weary at length of exile, the aged warrior, recollecting the King's personal attachment to him, resolved to throw himself on his clemency. As James returned from hunting in the park at Stirling, he saw a person at a distance, and, turning to his nobles, exclaimed, "Yonder is my *Graysteil*, Archibald of Kilspindie!" As he approached, Douglas threw himself on his knees, and implored permission to lead an obscure life in his native land. But the name of Douglas was an amulet, which steel'd the King's heart against the influence of compassion and juvenile recollection. He passed the suppliant without an answer, and rode briskly up the steep hill towards the castle. Kilspindie, though loaded with a hauberk under his clothes, kept pace with the horse, in

While these transactions, by which the fate of Scotland was influenced, were passing upon the Eastern Border, the Lord Maxwell seems to have exercised a most uncontrolled domination in Dumfries-shire. Even the power of the Earl of Angus was exerted in vain against the banditti of Liddesdale, protected and bucklered by this mighty chief. Repeated complaints were made by the English residents, of the devastation occasioned by the depredations of the Elliots, Scotts, and Armstrongs, connived at and encouraged by Maxwell, Buccleuch, and Fairnihirst. At a convention of Border commissioners, it was agreed that the King of England, in case the excesses of the Liddesdale freebooters were not duly redressed, should be at liberty to issue let-

vain endeavouring to catch a glance from the implacable monarch. He sat down at the gate, weary and exhausted, and asked for a draught of water. Even this was refused by the royal attendants. The King afterwards blamed their discourtesy; but Kilspindie was obliged to return to France, where he died of a broken heart; the same disease which afterwards brought to the grave his unrelenting sovereign. Even the stern Henry VIII. blamed his nephew's conduct, quoting the generous saying, "A King's face should give grace."—GODSCROFT, vol ii. p. 107.

ters of reprisal to his injured subjects, granting "power to invade the said inhabitants of Liddesdale, to their slaughters, burning, hershipps, robbing, reifing, despoiling, and destruction, and so to continue the same at his Grace's pleasure," till the attempts of the inhabitants were fully atoned for. This impolitic expedient, by which the Scottish Prince, unable to execute justice on his turbulent subjects, committed to a rival sovereign the power of unlimited chastisement, was a principal cause of the savage state of the Borders. For the inhabitants, finding that the sword of revenge was substituted for that of justice, were loosened from their attachment to Scotland, and boldly threatened to carry on their depredations, in spite of the efforts of both kingdoms.

James V., however, was not backward in using more honourable expedients to quell the banditti on the Borders. The imprison-
1529 ment of their chiefs, and a noted expedition, in which many of the principal thieves were executed (see introduction to the ballad, called *Johnie Armstrong,*) produced such good effects, that, according to an ancient picturesque history, "thereafter there was great peace and rest a long

time, wherethrough the King had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick forest, in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the King so good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife."—PITSCOTTIE, p. 153.

A breach with England interrupted the tranquillity of the Borders. The Earl of Northumberland, a formidable name to Scotland, ravaged the Middle Marches, and burnt Branxholm, the abode of Bucoleuch, the hereditary enemy of the English name. Buccleuch, with the barons of Cessford and Fairnihirst, retaliated by a raid into England, where they acquired much spoil. On the East March, Fowberry was destroyed by the Scotts, and Dunglass Castle by D'Arcy, and the banished Angus. 1532 1533

A short peace was quickly followed by another war, which proved fatal to Scotland, and to her King. In the battle of Haddenrig, the English, and the exiled Douglasses, were defeated by the Lords Huntly and Home; but this was a transient gleam of success. Kelso was burnt,

1542 and the Borders ravaged, by the Duke of Norfolk; and finally, the rout of Solway Moss, in which ten thousand men, the flower of the Scottish army, were dispersed and defeated by a band of five hundred English cavalry, or rather by their own dissensions, broke the proud heart of James; a death more painful, a hundred-fold, than was met by his father in the field of Flodden.

When the strength of the Scottish army had sunk, without wounds, and without renown, the principal chiefs were led captive into England. Among these was the Lord Maxwell, who was compelled, by the menaces of Henry, to swear allegiance to the English monarch. There is still in existence the spirited instrument of vindication, by which he renounces his connexion with England, and the honours and estates which had been proffered him, as the price of treason to his infant sovereign. From various bonds of manrent, it appears that all the Western Marches

1543 were swayed by this powerful chieftain. With Maxwell, and the other captives, returned to Scotland the banished Earl of Angus, and his brother, Sir George Douglas, after a

banishment of fifteen years. This powerful family regained at least a part of their influence upon the Borders; and, grateful to the kingdom which had afforded them protection during their exile, became chiefs of the English faction in Scotland, whose object it was to urge a contract of marriage betwixt the young Queen and the heir-apparent of England. The impetuosity of Henry, the ancient hatred betwixt the nations, and the wavering temper of the Governor, Arran, prevented the success of this measure. The wrath of the disappointed monarch discharged itself in a wide-wasting and furious invasion of the East Marches, conducted by the Earl of Hertford. Seton, Home, and Buccleuch, hanging on the mountains of Lammermoor, saw, with ineffectual regret, the fertile plains of Merse and Lothian, and the metropolis itself, reduced to a smoking desert. Hertford had scarcely retreated with the main army, when Evers and Latoun laid waste the whole vale of Tiviot, with a ferocity of devastation hitherto unheard of.[1]

[1] In Hayne's State Papers, from p. 43 to p. 64, is an account of these destructive forays. One list of the places burnt and destroyed enumerates—

The same "lion mode of wooing," being pursued during the minority of Edward VI., totally alienated the affections even of those Scots who were most attached to the English interest. The Earl of Angus, in particular, united himself to the Governor, and gave the English a sharp
1545 defeat at Ancram Moor, a particular account of which action is subjoined to the ballad, entitled, *The Eve of St John.* Even the fatal defeat at Pinkey, which at once renewed the carnage of Flodden, and the disgrace of Solway, served to prejudice the cause of the victors. The Borders saw, with dread and detestation, the ruinous fortress of Roxburgh once more receive an English garrison, and the widow of Lord Home driven from his baronial castle to make
1547 room for the "*Southern Reivers.*" Many of the barons made a reluctant submission

Monasteries and Freerchouses,	7
Castles, towres, and piles,	16
Market townes,	5
Villages,	243
Mylnes,	13
Spytells and hospitals,	3

See also official accounts of these expeditions, in DALYELL'S *Fragments.*

to Somerset; but those of the higher part of the Marches remained among their mountains, meditating revenge. A similar incursion was made on the West Borders by Lord Wharton, who, with five thousand men, ravaged and overran Annandale, Nithsdale, and Galloway, compelling the inhabitants to receive the yoke of England.[1]

[1] Patten gives us a list of those East Border chiefs who did homage to the Duke of Somerset, on the 24th of September, 1547; namely, the Lairds of Cessforth, Fernyherst, Grenehead, Hunthill, Hundely, Makerstone, Bymerside, Bounjedworth, Ormeston, Mellestaines, Warmesay, Synton, Egerston, Merton, Mowe, Rydell, Beamerside. Of gentlemen, he enumerates George Tromboul, Jhon Haliburton, Robert Car, Robert Car of Greyden, Adam Kirton, Andrew Mether, Saunders Purvose of Erleston, Mark Car of Littledean, George Car of Faldenside, Alexander Mackdowal, Charles Rutherford, Thomas Car of the Yere, Jhon Car of Meynthorn (Nenthorn), Walter Haliburton, Richard Hanganside, Andrew Car, James Douglas of Cavers, James Car of Mersington, George Hoppringle, William Ormeston of Emerden, John Grymslowe.—PATTEN, *in* DALYELL'S *Fragments*, p. 87.

On the West Border, the following barons and clans submitted, and gave pledges to Lord Wharton, that they would serve the King of England, with the number of followers annexed to their names:—

The arrival of French auxiliaries, and of French gold, rendered vain the splendid successes of the English. One by one, the fortresses which they occupied were recovered by

ANNERDALE.	
Laird of Kirkmighel,	222
Rose,	165
Hempsfield,	163
Home Ends,	162
Wamfrey,	102
Dunwoddy,	44
Newby & Gratney,	122
Tinnel (Tinwald),	102
Patrick Murray,	203
Christie Urwin (Irving) of Coveshawe,	102
Cuthbert Urwen of Robbgill,	34
Urwens of Sennersack,	40
Wat Urwen,	20
Jeffrey Urwen,	93
T. Johnston of Crackburn,	64
James Johnston of Coites,	162
Johnstons of Craggyland,	37
Johnstons of Driesdell,	46
Johnstons of Malinshaw,	65
Gawen Johnston,	31
Will Johnston, the laird's brother,	110
Robin Johnston of Lochmaben,	67
NITHSDALE.	
Mr Maxwell and more,	1000
Laird of Closeburn,	403
Lag,	202
Cransfield,	27
Mr Ed. Creighton,	10
Laird of Cowhill,	91
Maxwells of Brackenside, and Vicar of Carlaverick,	310
ANNERDALE AND GALWAY.	
Lord Carlisle,	101
ANNERDALE AND CLIDSDALE.	
Laird of Applegirth,	242
LIDDESDALE AND DEBATEABLE LAND.	
Armstrongs,	300
Elwoods (Elliots,)	74
Nixons,	32
GALLOWAY.	
Laird of Dawbaytie,	41
Orcherton,	111
Carlisle,	206
Loughenwar,	45
Tutor of Bombie,	140
Abbot of Newabbey,	141
Town of Dumfries,	201

force, or by stratagem; and the vindictive cruelty of the Scottish Borderers made dreadful retaliation for the injuries they had sustained. An idea may be conceived of this horrible warfare, from the Memoirs of Beaugué, a French officer, serving in Scotland.

The Castle of Fairnihirst, situated about three miles above Jedburgh, had been taken and garrisoned by the English. The commander and his followers are accused of such excesses of lust and cruelty, "as would," says Beaugué, "have made to tremble the most savage Moor in Africa." A band of Frenchmen, with the Laird of Fairnihirst, and his Borderers, assaulted this fortress. The English archers showered their 1549
arrows down the steep ascent leading to the

ANNERDALE.		GALLOWAY.	
Laird of Gillersbie, . .	30	Town of Kircubrie, . .	36
Moffits, ...	24	TIVIDALE.	
Bells of Tostints, . . .	142	Laird of Drumlire, . .	364
Bells of Tindills, . . .	222	Caruthers, ...	71
Sir John Lawson, . .	32	Trumbells, ...	12
Town of Annan, . . .	33	ESKDALE.	
Roomes of Tordephe, . .	32	Battisons and Thomsons,	166

Total, 7008 men under English assurance.

Nicolson, from Bell's MS. Introduction to History of Cumberland, p. 65.

castle, and from the outer wall by which it was surrounded. A vigorous escalade, however, gained the base court, and the sharp fire of the French arquebusiers drove the bowmen into the square keep, or dungeon, of the fortress. Here the English defended themselves, till a breach in the wall was made by mining. Through this hole the commandant creeped forth; and, surrendering himself to De la Mothe-rouge, implored protection from the vengeance of the Borderers. But a Scottish Marchman, eyeing in the captive the ravisher of his wife, approached him ere the French officer could guess his intention, and, at one blow, carried his head four paces from the trunk. Above a hundred Scots rushed to wash their hands in the blood of their oppressor, bandied about the severed head, and expressed their joy in such shouts, as if they had stormed the city of London. The prisoners, who fell into their merciless hands, were put to death, after their eyes had been torn out; the victors contending who should display the greatest address in severing their legs and arms, before inflicting a mortal wound. When their own prisoners were slain, the Scottish, with an unextinguishable thirst

for blood, purchased those of the French; parting willingly with their very arms, in exchange for an English captive. "I myself," saye Beaugué, with military sang-froid, "I myself sold them a prisoner for a small horse. They laid him down upon the ground, galloped over him with their lances in rest, and wounded him as they passed. When slain, they cut his body in pieces, and bore the mangled gobbets, in triumph, on the points of their spears. I cannot greatly praise the Scottish for this practice. But the truth is, that the English tyranpized over the Borders in a most barbarous manner; and I think it was but fair to repay them, according to the proverb, in their own coin."—*Campagnes de Beaugué*,[1] (livre iii. chap. 13.)

A peace, in 1551, put an end to this war: the most destructive which, for a length of time, had ravaged Scotland. Some attention was paid by the governor and queen mother, to the administration of justice on the Border; and the chieftains, who had distinguished themselves during

[1 The Maitland Club of Glasgow printed, in 1830, a beautiful edition of the "Histoire de la Guerre d'Ecosse, par Ian de Beaugué, gentilhomme François."—ED.]

the late troubles, received the honour of knighthood.[1]

1552 At this time, also, the Debateable Land, a tract of country, situated betwixt the Esk and Sarke, claimed by both kingdoms, was divided by royal commissioners, appointed by the two crowns. By their award, this land of contention was separated by a line, drawn from east to west, betwixt the rivers. The upper half was adjudged to Scotland, and the more eastern part to England. Yet the Debateable Land continued long after to be the residence of thieves and banditti, to whom its dubious state had afforded a desirable refuge.[2]

In 1557, a new war broke out, in which rencounters on the Borders were, as usual, nume-

[1] These were the lairds of Buccleuch, Cessford, and Fairnihirst, Littleden, Grenehed, and Coldingknows. Buccleuch, whose gallant exploits we have noticed, did not long enjoy his new honours. He was murdered in the streets of Edinburgh by his hereditary enemies, the Kerrs, anno 1552.

[2] The jest of James VI. is well known, who, when a favourite cow had found her way from London, back to her native country of Fife, observed, "that nothing surprised him so much as her passing uninterrupted through the Debateable Land!"

rous, and with varied success. In some of these, the too-famous Bothwell is said to have given proofs of his courage, which was at other times very questionable.[1] About this time the Scottish Borderers seem to have acquired some ascendency over their southern neighbours.—STRYPE, vol. iii.—In 1559, peace was again restored.

The flame of reformation, long stifled in Scotland, now burst forth, with the violence of a volcanic eruption. The siege of Leith was commenced by the combined forces of the Congregation and of England. The Borderers cared little about speculative points of religion; but they showed themselves much interested in the treasures which passed through their country, for payment of the English forces at Edinburgh.

[1] He was Lord of Liddesdale, and keeper of the Hermitage Castle. But he had little effective power over that country, and was twice defeated by the Armstrongs, its lawless inhabitants.—*Border History*, p. 584. Yet the unfortunate Mary, in her famous apology, says, "that in the weiris against Ingland, he gaif proof of his valyentnes, courage, and gude conduct;" and praises him especially for subjugating "the rebellious subjectis inhabiting the cuntreis lying ewest the marches of Ingland."—*Keith*, p. 388. He appears actually to have defeated Sir Henry Percy, in a skirmish, called the Raid of Haltwellswire.

Much alarm was excited, lest the Marchers should intercept these weighty Protestant arguments; and it was, probably, by voluntarily imparting a share in them to Lord Home, that he became a sudden convert to the new faith.[1]

Upon the arrival of the ill-fated Mary in her native country, she found the Borders in a state of great disorder. The exertions of her natural brother (afterwards the famous Regent Murray) were necessary to restore some degree of tranquillity. He marched to Jedburgh, executed twenty or thirty of the transgressors, burnt many houses, and brought a number of prisoners to Edinburgh. The chieftains of the principal clans were also obliged to grant pledges for their future obedience.[2] A noted convention (for the particulars of which, see *Border Laws*, p. 84) adopted various regulations, which were attended with great advantage to the Marches.[2]

[1] This nobleman had, shortly before, threatened to spoil the English East March; "but," says the Duke of Norfolk, "we have provided such sauce for him, that I think he will not deal in such matter; but, if he do fire but one hay-goff, he shall not go to *Home* again without torch-light, and peradventure, may find a lanthorn at his own house."

[2] The commissioners on the English side were, the elder

The unhappy match betwixt Henry Darnley and his sovereign led to new dissensions on the Borders. The Homes, Kers, and other East Marchers, hastened to support the Queen, against Murray, Chatelherault, and other nobles, whom her marriage had offended. For the same purpose the Johnstones, Jardines, and clans of Annandale, entered into bonds of confederacy. But Liddesdale was under the influence of England; insomuch, that Randolph, the meddling English minister, proposed to hire a band of *strapping Elliots*, to find *Home business at Home, in looking after his corn and cattle.*—KEITH, p 265. *App.* 133.

This storm was hardly overblown, when Bothwell received the commission of lieutenant upon the Borders; but, as void of parts as of principle, he could not even recover to the Queen's allegiance his own domains in Liddesdale.—KEITH, *App.* 165. The Queen herself advanced to the Borders, to remedy this evil, and to hold courts

Lord Scroope of Bolton, Sir John Foster, Sir Thomas Gargrave, and Dr Rookby. On the Scottish side, appeared Sir John Maxwell of Terreagles, and Sir John Bellenden.

at Jedburgh. Bothwell was already in Liddesdale, where he had been severely wounded, in an attempt to seize John Elliot, of the Parke, a desperate freebooter; and happy had it been for Mary, had the dagger of the mosstrooper struck more home. Bothwell, being transported to his Castle of Hermitage, the Queen, upon hearing the tidings, hastened thither. A dangerous morass, still called the *Queen's Mire*,[1] is pointed out by tradition as the spot where the lovely Mary, and her white palfrey, were in danger of perishing. The distance betwixt Hermitage and Jedburgh, by the way of Hawick, is nearly twenty-four English miles. The Queen went and returned the same day. Whether she visited a

[1] The *Queen's Mire* is still a pass of danger, exhibiting, in many places, the bones of the horses which have been entangled in it. For what reason the Queen chose to enter Liddesdale, by the circuitous route of Hawick, is not told. There are other two passes from Jedburgh to Hermitage Castle; the one by the *Note of the Gate*, the other over the mountain called Winburgh. Either of these, but especially the latter, is several miles shorter than that by Hawick and the Queen's Mire. But, by the circuitous way of Hawick, the Queen could traverse the districts of more friendly clans, than by going directly into the disorderly province of Liddesdale.

wounded subject, or a lover in danger, has been warmly disputed in our latter days.

To the death of Henry Darnley, it is said, some of the Border Lords were privy. But the subsequent marriage, betwixt the Queen and Bothwell, alienated from her the affections of the chieftains of the Marches, most of whom aided the association of the insurgent barons. A few gentlemen of the Merse, however, joined the army which Mary brought to Carberry-hill. But no one was willing to fight for the detested Bothwell, nor did Bothwell himself show any inclination to put his person in jeopardy. The result to Mary was a rigorous captivity in Lochleven Castle; and the name of Bothwell scarcely again pollutes the page of Scottish history.

The distress of a beautiful and afflicted princess softened the hearts of her subjects; and when she escaped from her severe captivity, the most powerful barons in Scotland crowded around her standard. Among these were many of the West Border men, under the Lords Maxwell and Herries.[1] But the defeat at Langside was a death-blow to her interest in Scotland.

[1] The followers of these barons are said to have stolen

Not long afterwards occurred that period of general confusion on the Borders, when the insurrection of the Catholic Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland took place upon the Borders of England. Their tumultuary forces were soon dispersed, and the Earls themselves, with their principal followers, sought refuge upon the Scottish Marches. Northumberland was betrayed into the hands of the Regent; but Westmoreland, with his followers, took refuge in the Castle of Fairnihirst, where he was protected by its powerful owner. The Regent himself came to Jedburgh, to obtain possession of these important pledges; but as he marched towards the Castle of Fairnihirst, his men shrunk from him by degrees, till he was left with a small body of his own personal dependents, inadequate to the task for which he had undertaken the expedition. Westmoreland afterwards escaped to Flanders by sea. Robert Constable, a spy sent by Sir Ralph Sadler into Scotland, gives a lively account of the state of the Borders at this time.[1]

the horses of their friends, while they were engaged in the battle.

[1] He was guided by one Pyle of Millheuch, (upon Ox-

The death of the Regent Murray, in 1569, excited the party of Mary to hope and to exertion. It seems, that the design of Bothwellhaugh, who slew him, was well known upon the

nam Water,) and gives the following account of his conversation with him on the state of the country, and the power of his master, the Baron of Fairnihirst:—By the way as we rode, I tould my oste that the Lord of Farneherst, his master, had taken such an entreprise in hand as not a subject in England durst do the like, to kepe any mann openly as he did the Earle of Westmorland, against the will of the chief in aucthoritie. He said that his master cared not so much for the Regent as the Regent cared for him, for he was well able to raise iij thousand men within his own rule, beside that his first wief, by whom he hed goodly children, was daughter to the Lord Grange, Captaine of Edenborowe Castell, and Provoste of Edenborowe. This wief that he married lately is sister to the Lord of Bucclewghe, a man of greater power than his master; also my Lord Hume, and almost all the gentlemen in Tevydale, the Marsh, and Lowdyan, were knitt together in such friendship that they are agred all to take one part; and that the Lord Grange was offended with the Lord Hume and the Lord Farneherst, because they toke not the Earle of Northumberland from my Lord Regent at Gedworthe, and sent plane word to the Lord Farneherst, that if the Lord Regent came any more to seeke him in Tevydale, he should lose all his bulles, both the Duke, the Lord Herris, the secretary, and others, he should sett them

Borders; for, the very day on which the slaughter happened, Buccleuch and Fairnihirst, with their clans, broke into England, and spread devastation along the frontiers, with unusual fero-

all at libertye that would come with all their power, with good will, to take his part; and by as much as I hear since the Tevydale menn pretends to do the anoyances that they can to England, so sone as this storme is past, and meanes not to answer to any day of truce."

Another passage presents a lively picture of the inside of the outlaw's cabin: "I left Farneherst, and went to my ostes house, where I found many gests of dyvers factions, some outlawes of Ingland, some of Scotland, some neighbors therabout, at cards; some for ale, some for plake and hardhedds; and after that I had diligently learned and enquired that there was none of any surname that had me in deadly fude, nor none that knew me, I sat downe, and plaid for hardhedds emongs them, where I hard, *vox populi*, that the Lord Regent would not, for his own honor, nor for thonor of his countery, deliver the Earles, if he had them bothe, unlest it were to have there Quene delivered to him; and if he wold agre to make that change, the Borderers wold stert up in his contrary, and reave both the Quene and the Lords from him, for the like shame was never done in Scotland; and that he durst better eate his owne luggs then come again to seke Farneherst; if he did, he should be fought with ere he came over Sowtrey edge. Hector of Tharlowes [1] hedd was wished to have been eaten

[1] Hector of Harlaw is meant, an outlaw who betrayed the Earl of Northumberland.

city. It is probable they well knew that the controlling hand of the Regent was that day palsied by death. Buchanan exclaims loudly against this breach of truce with Elizabeth, charging Queen Mary's party with having "houndit furth proude and uncircumspecte young men, to hery, burne, and slay, and tak prisoners, in her realme, and use all misordour and crueltie, not only vsit in weir, but detestabil to all barbar and wild Tartaris, in slaying of prisoneris, and contrair to all humanitie and justice, keeping na promeis to miserabil captives resavit anis to thair mercy."—*Admonitioun to the trew Lordis, Striveling,* 1571. He numbers, among these insurgents, Highlanders as well as Borderers, Buccleuch and Fairnihirst, the Johnstones and Armstrongs, the Grants and the clan Chattan. Besides these powerful clans, Mary numbered among her adherents the Maxwells, and almost all the west Border leaders, excepting Drumlanrig, and Jardine of Applegirth. On the Eastern Border, the faction of the infant King was more powerful; for, although

amongs us at supper."—SADLER'S *State Papers*, Edin. 1809, vol ii. pp. 384, 388.

deserted by Lord Home, the greater part of his clan, under the influence of Wedderburn, remained attached to that party. The Laird of Cessford wished them well, and the Earl of Angus naturally followed the steps of his uncle Morton. A sharp and bloody invasion of the Middle March, under the command of the Earl of Sussex, avenged with interest the raids of Buccleuch and Fairnihirst. The domains of these chiefs were laid waste, their castles burnt and destroyed. The narrow vales of Beaumont and Kale, belonging to Buccleuch, were treated with peculiar severity; and the forays of Hertford were equalled by that of Sussex. In vain did the chiefs request assistance from the government to defend their fortresses. Through the predominating interest of Elizabeth in the Scottish councils, this was refused to all but Home, whose castle, nevertheless, again received an English garrison; while Buccleuch and Fairnihirst complained bitterly that those, who had instigated their invasion, durst not even come so far as Lauder, to show countenance to their defence against the English. The bickerings which followed distracted the whole kingdom. One celebrated ex-

ploit may be selected, as an illustration of the Border fashion of war.

The Earl of Lennox, who had succeeded Murray in the regency, held a parliament at Stirling, in 1571. The young King was exhibited to the great council of his nation. He had been tutored to repeat a set speech, composed for the occasion; but, observing that the roof of the building was a little decayed, he interrupted his recitation, and exclaimed, with childish levity, "that there was a hole in the parliament,"—words which, in those days, were held to presage the deadly breach shortly to be made in that body, by the death of him in whose name it was convoked.

Amid the most undisturbed security of confidence, the lords who composed this parliament were roused at daybreak by the shouts of their enemies, in the heart of the town. *God and the Queen!* resounded from every quarter, and in a few minutes, the Regent, with the astonished nobles of his party, were prisoners to a band of two hundred Border cavalry, led by Scott of Buccleuch, and to the Lord Claud Hamilton, at the head of three hundred infantry. These enterprising chiefs, by a rapid and well-concerted

manœuvre, had reached Stirling in a night march from Edinburgh, and, without so much as being bayed at by a watch-dog, had seized the principal street of the town. The fortunate obstinacy of Morton saved his party. Stubborn and undaunted, he defended his house till the assailants set it on flames, and then yielded with reluctance to his kinsman Buccleuch. But the time which he had gained effectually served his cause. The Borderers had dispersed to plunder the stables of the nobility; the infantry thronged tumultuously together on the main street, when the Earl of Mar, issuing from the castle, placed one or two small pieces of ordnance, in his own half-built house,[1] which commands the market-place. Hardly had the artillery begun to scour the street, when the assailants, surprised in their turn, fled with precipitation. Their alarm was increased by the townsmen thronging to arms. Those who had been so lately triumphant, were now, in many instances, asking the protection of their own prisoners. In all probability, not a man would have escaped death, or captivity, but for the character-

[1] This building still [1802] remains in the unfinished state which it then presented.

istic rapacity of Buccleuch's marauders, who, having seized and carried off all the horses in the town, left the victors no means of following the chase. The Regent was slain by an officer, named Caulder, in order to prevent his being rescued. Spens of Ormiston, to whom he had surrendered, lost his life in a generous attempt to protect him.[1] Hardly does our history present

[1] Birrel says, that "the Regent was shot by an unhappy fellow, while sitting on horseback behind the Laird of Buccleuch."—The following curious account of the whole transaction, is extracted from a journal of principal events, in the years 1570, 1571, 1572, and part of 1573, kept by Richard Bannatyne, amanuensis to John Knox. "The fourt of September, they of Edinburgh, horsemen and futmen, (and, as was reported, the most part of Clidisdaill, that pertenit to the Hamiltons,) come to Striveling, the number of iii or iiii c men, on hors bak, guydit be ane George Bell, their hacbutteris being all horsed, enterit in Striveling, be fyve houris in the morning, (whair thair was never one to mak watche,) crying this slogane, 'God and the Queen! Ane Hamiltoune! Think on the Bishop of St Androis—all is owres;' and so a certaine come to everie grit manis ludgene, and apprehendit the Lordis Mortoun and Glencarne; but Mortounis hous they set on fyre, wha randerit him to the Laird of Balcleuch. Wormestoun being appointed to the Regentes hous, desyred him to cum furth, which he had no will to doe, yet, be perswasione of Gar-

another enterprise, so well planned, so happily commenced, and so strangely disconcerted. To the licence of the Marchmen the failure was attributed; but the same cause ensured a safe re-

leys, and otheris with him, tho't it best to come in will, nor to byde the extremitie, becaus they supposed there was no resistance, and saw the Regent come furth, and was rendered to Wormestoune, under promeis to save his lyfe. Captayne Crawfurde, being in the town, gat sum men out of the castell, and uther gentlemen being in the town, come as they my't best to the geat, chased them out of the town. The Regent was shot by ane Captain Cader, who confessed that he did it at commande of George Bell, wha was commandit so to doe be the Lord Huntlie and Claud Hamilton. Some says, that Wormestoune was schot by the same schot that slew the Regent, but alwayis he was slane, notwithstanding the Regent cryed to save him, but it culd not be, the furie was so grit of the persewaris, who, following so fast, the Lord of Mortone said to Balcleuch, 'I sall save you as ye savit me,' and so he was tane. Garleys, and sindrie otheris, ware slane at the Port, in the pursute of thame. Thair war ten or twelve gentlemen slane of the King's folk, and als mony of theris, or mea, as was said, and a dozen or xvi tane. Twa especiall servantis of the Lord Argyle's were slane also. This Cader, that schot the Regent, was once turned bak off the toune, and was send again (as is said) be the Lord Huntlie, to cause Wormistoun retire; but, before he come agane, he was dispatched, and had gottin deidis woundis.

"The Regent being schot, (as said is,) was brought to

treat.—SPOTTISWOODE, GODSCROFT, ROBERTSON, MELVILLE.

The wily Earl of Morton, who, after the short intervening regency of Mar, succeeded to the supreme authority, contrived, by force or artifice, to render the party of the King everywhere superior. Even on the Middle Borders, he had the address to engage in his cause the powerful, though savage and licentious, clans of Rutherford and Turnbull, as well as the citizens of Jedburgh. He was thus enabled to counterpoise his powerful opponents, Buccleuch and Fairnihirst, in their own country; and, after an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Jedburgh, even these warm adherents of Mary relinquished her cause in despair.

the castel, whar he callit for ane phisitione, one for his soule, ane uther for his bodie. But all hope of life was past, for he was schot in his entreallis; and swa, after sumthingis spoken to the Lordis, which I know not, he departed in the feare of God, and made a blised end; whilk the rest of the Lordis, that tho't thame to his hiert, and lytle reguardit him, shall not mak so blised ane end, unles they mend their maneirs."

This curious manuscript has been published under the inspection of John Graham Dalyell, Esq.

While Morton swayed the state, his attachment to Elizabeth, and the humiliation which many of the Border chiefs had undergone, contributed to maintain good order on the Marches, till James VI. himself assumed the reins of government. The intervening skirmish of the Reidswire, (see the ballad under that title,) was but a sudden explosion of the rivalry and suppressed hatred of the Borderers of both kingdoms. In truth, the stern rule of Morton, and of his delegates, men unconnected with the Borders by birth, maintained in that country more strict discipline then had ever before been there exercised. Perhaps this hastened his fall.

The unpopularity of Morton, acquired partly by the strict administration of justice, and partly by avarice and severity, forced him from the regency. In 1578, he retired, apparently, from state affairs, to his Castle of Dalkeith; which the populace, emphatically expressing their awe and dread of his person, termed the *Lion's Den.* But Morton could not live in retirement; and, early in the same year, the aged lion again rushed from his cavern. By a mixture of policy and violence, he possessed himself of the fortress of

Stirling, and of the person of James. His nephew, Angus, hastened to his assistance. Against him appeared his own old adherent Cessford, with many of the Homes, and the citizens of Edinburgh. Alluding to the restraint of the King's person, they bore his effigy on their banners, with a rude rhyme, demanding liberty or death.—BIRREL's *Diary, ad annum* 1578. The Earl of Morton marched against his foes as far as Falkirk, and a desperate action must have ensued, but for the persuasion of Bowes, the English ambassador. The only blood then spilt, was in a duel betwixt Tait, a follower of Cessford, and Johnstone, a West Border man, attending upon Angus. They fought with lances, and on horseback, according to the fashion of the Borders. The former was unhorsed and slain, the latter desperately wounded.—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 261. The prudence of the late Regent appears to have abandoned him, when he was decoyed into a treaty upon this occasion. It was not long before Morton, the veteran warrior, and the crafty statesman, was forced to bend his neck to an engine of death,[1] the use of which he himself had introduced into Scotland.

[1] A rude sort of guillotine, called the *Maiden* The im-

Released from the thraldom of Morton, the King, with more than youthful levity, threw his supreme power into the hands of Lennox and Arran. The religion of the first and the infamous character of the second favourite, excited the hatred of the commons, while their exclusive and engrossing power awakened the jealousy of the other nobles. James, doomed to be the sport of contending factions, was seized at Stirling by the nobles, confederated in what was termed the raid of Ruthven. But the conspirators soon suffered their prize to escape, and were rewarded for their enterprise with exile or death.

In 1585, an affray took place at a Border meeting, in which Lord Russel, the Earl of Bedford's eldest son, chanced to be slain. Queen Elizabeth imputed the guilt of this slaughter to Thomas Ker of Fairnihirst, instigated by Arran. Upon the imperious demand of the English ambassador, both were committed to prison; but the minion, Arran, was soon restored to liberty

plement is now in possession of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries.

[By a curious coincidence, one of the very first that suffered by the *Guillotine*, is said to have been the surgeon who invented and gave his name to that more celebrated *maiden*.—Ed.]

and favour; while Fairnihirst, the dread of the English Borderers, and the gallant defender of Queen Mary, died in his confinement, of a broken heart.—SPOTTISWOODE, p. 341.

The tyranny of Arran becoming daily more insupportable, the exiled lords, joined by Maxwell, Home, Bothwell, and other Border chieftains, seized the town of Stirling, which was pillaged by their disorderly followers, invested the castle, which surrendered at discretion, and drove the favourite from the King's council.[1]

The King, perceiving the Earl of Bothwell among the armed barons, to whom he surrendered his person, addressed him in these prophetic words:—"Francis, Francis, what moved thee to come in arms against thy prince, who never wronged thee? I wish thee a more quiet spirit, else I foresee thy destruction."—SPOTTISWOODE, p. 343.

[1] The associated nobles seem to have owed their success chiefly to the Border spearmen; for though they had a band of mercenaries, who used fire-arms, yet they were such bad masters of their craft, their captain was heard to observe, "that those, who knew his soldiers as well as he did, would hardly choose to *march before them.*"—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 368.

In fact, the extraordinary enterprises of this nobleman disturbed the next ten years of James's reign. Francis Stuart, son to a bastard of James V., had been invested with the titles and estates belonging to his maternal uncle, James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, upon the forfeiture of that infamous man; and consequently became Lord of Liddesdale, and of the Castle of Hermitage. This acquisition of power upon the Borders, where he could easily levy followers willing to undertake the most desperate enterprises, joined to the man's native daring and violent spirit, rendered Bothwell the most turbulent insurgent that ever distracted the tranquillity of a kingdom. During the King's absence in Denmark, Bothwell, swayed by the superstition of his age, had tampered with certain soothsayers and witches, by whose pretended art he hoped to foretell, or perhaps to achieve, the death of his monarch. In one of the courts of inquisition, which James delighted to hold upon the professors of the occult sciences, some of his cousin's proceedings were brought to light, for which he was put in ward in the Castle of Edinburgh. Burning with revenge, he broke from his confinement, and lurked for

some time upon the Borders, where he hoped for the countenance of his son-in-law, Buccleuch. Undeterred by the absence of that chief, who, in obedience to the royal command, had prudently retired to France, Bothwell attempted the desperate enterprise of seizing the person of the King, while residing in his metropolis. At the dead of the night, followed by a band of Borderers, he occupied the court of the palace of Holyrood, and began to burst open the doors of the royal apartments. The nobility, distrustful of each other, and ignorant of the extent of the conspiracy, only endeavoured to make good the defence of their separate lodgings; but darkness and confusion prevented the assailants from profiting by their disunion. Melville, who was present, gives a lively picture of the scene of disorder, transiently illuminated by the glare of passing torches; while the report of fire-arms, the clatter of armour, the din of hammers thundering on the gates, mingled wildly with the war-cry of the Borderers, who shouted incessantly, "Justice! Justice! A Bothwell! A Bothwell!" The citizens of Edinburgh at length began to assemble

for the defence of their sovereign; and Bothwell was compelled to retreat, which he did without considerable loss.—MELVILLE, p. 356. A similar attempt on the person of James, while residing at Faulkland, also misgave; but the credit which Bothwell obtained on the Borders, by these bold and desperate enterprises, was incredible. "All Tiviotdale," says Spottiswoode, "ran after him;" so that he finally obtained his object; and at Edinburgh, in 1593, he stood before James, an unexpected apparition, with his naked sword in his hand. "Strike!" said James, with royal dignity—"Strike, and end thy work! I will not survive my dishonour." But Bothwell, with unexpected moderation, only stipulated for remission of his forfeiture, and did not even insist on remaining at court, whence his party was shortly expelled, by the return of the Lord Home, and his other enemies. Incensed at this reverse, Bothwell levied a body of four hundred cavalry, and attacked the King's guard in broad day, upon the Borough Moor near Edinburgh. The ready succour of the citizens saved James from falling once more into the hands of his turbulent

subject.[1] On a subsequent day, Bothwell met the Laird of Cessford, riding near Edinburgh, with whom he fought a single combat, which lasted for two hours.[2] But his credit was now fallen; he retreated to England, whence he was driven by Elizabeth, and then wandered to Spain and Italy, where he subsisted, in indigence and obscurity, on the bread which he earned by apostatizing to the faith of Rome. So fell this agitator of domestic broils, whose name passed into a proverb, denoting a powerful and turbulent demagogue.[3]

[1] Spottiswoode says, the King awaited this charge with firmness; but Birrell avers, that he fled upon the gallop. The same author, instead of the firm deportment of James, when seized by Bothwell, describes "the king's majestie" as "flying down the back stair, with his breeches in his hand, in great fear."—BIRREL, *apud* DALYELL, p. 30. Such is the difference betwixt the narrative of the courtly archbishop, and that of the Presbyterian burgess of Edinburgh.

[2] This rencounter took place at Humbie, in East Lothian. Bothwell was attended by a servant, called Gibson, and Cessford by one of the Rutherfords, who was hurt in the cheek. The combatants parted from pure fatigue; for the defensive armour of the times was so completely impenetrable, that the wearer seldom sustained much damage by actual wounds.

[3] Sir Walter Raleigh, in writing of Essex, then in pri-

While these scenes were passing in the metropolis, the Middle and Western Borders were furiously agitated. The families of Cessford and Fairnihirst disputed their right to the wardenry of the Middle Marches, and to the provostry of Jedburgh; and William Kerr of Ancram, a follower of the latter, was murdered by the young chief of Cessford, at the instigation of his mother—SPOTTISWOODE, p. 383. But this was trifling, compared to the civil war waged on the western frontier, between the Johnstones and Maxwells, of which there is a minute account in the introduction to the ballad, entitled, "*Maxwell's Goodnight.*" Prefixed to that termed "*Kinmont Willie,*" the reader will find an account of the last warden raids performed on the Border.

My sketch of Border history now draws to a close. The accession of James to the English

son, says, "Let the Queen hold *Bothwell* while she hath him."—MURDIN, vol. ii. p. 812. It appears from Creichton's *Memoirs*, that Bothwell's grandson, though so nearly related to the royal family, actually rode a private in the Scottish horse guards, in the reign of Charles II.—*Edinburgh*, 1731, p. 42.

[See Notes to *Old Mortality*.—ED.]

crown converted the extremity into the centre of his kingdom.

The East Marches of Scotland were, at this momentous period, in a state of comparative civilisation. The rich soil of Berwickshire soon invited the inhabitants to the arts of agriculture. Even in the days of Lesley, the nobles and barons of the Merse differed in manners from the other Borderers, administered justice with regularity, and abstained from plunder and depredation.—*De moribus Scotorum*, p. 7. But on the Middle and Western Marches, the inhabitants were unrestrained moss-troopers and cattle-drivers, "knowing no measure of law," says Camden, "but the length of their swords." The sterility of the mountainous country which they inhabited, offered little encouragement to industry; and, for the long series of centuries which we have hastily reviewed, the hands of rapine were never there folded in inactivity, nor the sword of violence returned to the scabbard. Various proclamations were in vain issued for interdicting the use of horses and arms upon the West Border of England and Scotland.[1] The evil was

[1] "Proclamation shall be made, that all inhabiting with-

found to require the radical cure of extirpation. Buccleuch collected under his banners the most desperate of the Border warriors, of whom he formed a legion, for the service of the states of Holland, who had as much reason to rejoice on their arrival upon the continent, as Britain to congratulate herself upon their departure. It may be presumed, that few of this corps ever returned to their native country. The clan of Græme, a hardy and ferocious set of freebooters, inhabiting chiefly the Debateable Land, were, by a very summary exertion of authority, trans-

in Tynedale and Riddesdale, in Northumberland; Bewcastledale, Willgavey, the north part of Gilsland, Esk, and Leven, in Cumberland; East and West Tividale, Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewsdale, and Annerdale, in Scotland, (saving noblemen and gentlemen unsuspected of felony and theft, and not being of broken clans, and their household servants, dwelling within those several places, before recited,) shall put away all armour and weapons, as well offensive as defensive, as jacks, spears, lances, swords, daggers, steel-caps, hackbuts, pistols, plate-sleeves, and such like; and shall not keep any horse, gelding, or mare, above the value of fifty shillings sterling, or thirty pounds Scots, upon the like pain of imprisonment."—*Proceedings of the Border Commissioners*, 1605. *Introduction to History of Cumberland*, p. 127.

ported to Ireland, and their return prohibited under pain of death. Against other offenders, measures equally arbitrary were without hesitation pursued. Numbers of Border riders were executed, without even the formality of a trial: and it is even said, that, in mockery of justice, assizes were held upon them after they had suffered. For these acts of tyranny, see JOHNSTON, p. 374, 414, 39, 93. The memory of Dunbar's legal proceedings at Jedburgh, are preserved in the proverbial phrase, *Jeddert Justice*, which signifies, trial after execution.[1] By this rigour, though sternly and unconscientiously exercised, the Border marauders were, in the course of years, either reclaimed or exterminated; though nearly a century elapsed ere their

[1] A similar proverb in England of the same interpretation, is *Lydford Law*, derived from Lydford, a corporation in Devonshire, where, it seems, the same irregular administration of justice prevailed. A burlesque copy of verses on this town begins,

"I oft have heard of Lydford Law,
How in the morn they hang and draw,
And sit in judgment after."

See WESCOTT's *History of Devonshire*.

manners were altogether assimilated to those of their countrymen.[1]

[1] See the acts 18 Cha. II. ch. 3. and 30 Cha. II. ch. 2, against the Border Moss-troopers; to which we may add the following curious extracts from *Mercurius Politicus*, a newspaper, published during the usurpation.

Thursday, November 11, 1662.

"Edinburgh.—The Scotts and Moss-troopers have again revived their old custom of robbing and murthering the English, whether soldiers or other, upon all opportunities, within these three weeks. We have had notice of several robberies and murders, committed by them. Among the rest, a lieutenant, and one other of Col. Overton's regiment, returning from England, were robbed not far from Dunbarr. A lieutenant, lately master of the customs at Kirkcudbright, was killed about twenty miles from this place; and four foot-soldiers of Col. Overton's were killed, going to their quarters, by some mossers, who, after they had given them quarter, tied their hands behind them, and then threw them down a steep hill or rock, as it was related by a Scotchman, who was with them, but escaped."

Ibidem.—"*October* 13, 1663.—The Parliament, October 12, past an act, declaring, any person that shall discover any felon, or felons, (commonly called, or known, by the name of Moss-troopers,) residing upon the Borders of England and Scotland, shall have a reward of ten pound upon their conviction."

In these hasty sketches of Border history, I have endeavoured to select such incidents, as may introduce to the reader the character of the Marchmen, more briefly and better than a formal essay upon their manners. If I have been successful in the attempt, he is already acquainted with the mixture of courage and rapacity by which they were distinguished, and has reviewed some of the scenes in which they acted a principal part. It is, therefore, only necessary to notice, more minutely, some of their peculiar customs and modes of life.

Their morality was of a singular kind. The rapine, by which they subsisted, they accounted lawful and honourable. Ever liable to lose their whole substance, by an incursion of the English on a sudden breach of truce, they cared little to waste their time in cultivating crops to be reaped by their foes. Their cattle was, therefore, their chief property; and these were nightly exposed to the southern Borderers, as rapacious and active as themselves. Hence robbery assumed

the appearance of fair reprisal. The fatal privilege of pursuing the marauders into their own country, for recovery of stolen goods, led to continual skirmishes. The warden also, himself frequently the chieftain of a Border horde,[1] when redress was not instantly granted by the opposite officer, for depredations sustained by his district, was entitled to retaliate upon England by a *warden raid.* In such cases, the moss-troopers, who crowded to his standard, found themselves pursuing their craft under legal authority, and became the followers and favourites of the military magistrate, whose ordinary duty it was to check and suppress them. (See the curious history of *Geordie Bourne*, App. No. II.) Equally unable and unwilling to make nice distinctions, they were not to be convinced, that what was to-day fair booty, was to-morrow a subject of theft. National animosity usually gave an additional stimulus to their rapacity; although it must be owned that their depredations extended also to the more cultivated parts of their own country.

[1] The armorial bearings, adopted by many of the Border tribes, shew how little they were ashamed of their trade

Satchells, who lived when the old Border ideas of *meum* and *tuum* were still in some force, endeavours to draw a very nice distinction betwixt a freebooter and a thief; and thus sings he of the Armstrongs:—

"On that Border was the Armstrongs, able men;
Somewhat unruly, and very ill to tame.
I would have none think that I call them thieves,
For, if I did, it would be arrant lies.

— — — — —

Near a Border frontier, in the time of war,
There's ne'er a man but he's a freebooter.

— — — — —

Because to all men it may appear,
The freebooter he is a volunteer;
In the muster-rolls he has no desire to stay;
He lives by purchase, he gets no pay.

— — — — —

It's most clear, a freebooter doth live in hazard's train,
A freebooter's a cavalier that ventures life for gain:

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of rapine. Like *Falstaff*, they were "Gentlemen of the night, minions of the moon," under whose countenance they committed their depredations.—Hence, the emblematic moons and stars so frequently charged in the arms of Border families. Their mottos also bear an allusion to their profession:—"*Reparabit cornua Phœbe*," i.e. "We'll have moonlight again," is that of the Family of Harden; "Ye shall want, ere I want," that of Cranstown; "Watch weel," of Haliburton, &c.

But, since King James the Sixth to England went,
There has been no cause of grief;
And he that hath transgress'd since then
Is no *Freebooter*, but a *Thief*."

History of the Name of Scott.

The inhabitants of the inland counties did not understand these subtile distinctions. Sir David Lindsay, in the curious drama, published by Mr Pinkerton, introduces, as one of his *dramatis personæ*, *Common Thift*, a Borderer, who is supposed to come to Fife to steal the Earl of Rothes' best hackney, and Lord Lindsay's brown jennet. *Oppression* also, (another personage there introduced,) seems to be connected with the Borders: for, finding himself in danger, he exclaims,—

"War God that I were sound and haill,
Now lyftit into Liddesdail;
The Mers sowld fynd me beif and caill,
What rack of breid?
War Lthair lyftit with my lyfe,
The devill sowld styk me with a knyffe,
An' ever I cum agane in Fyfe,
Till I were deid."—

PINKERTON'S *Scottish Poems*, vol. ii. p. 180.

Again, when *Common Thift* is brought to condign

punishment, he remembers his Border friends in his dying speech:

"The widdefow wardanis tuik my geir,
And left me nowthir horse nor meir,
Nor erdly guid that me belangit;
Now, walloway! I mon be hangit.
— — — — —
Adew! my bruthir Annan thieves,
That holpit me in my mischevis;
Adew! Grossars, Nicksoni, and Bells,
Oft have we fairne owrthreuch the fells:
Adew! Robsons, Howis, and Pylis,
That in our craft has mony wilis:
Littlis, Trumbells, and Armestranges;
Adew! all theeves, that me belangis;
Bailowes, Erewynis, and Elwandis,
Speedy of flicht, and slicht of handis;
The Scotts of Eisdale, and the Gramis,
I haif na time to tell your nameis."

PINKERTON'S *Scottish Poems*, vol. ii. p. 156.

When *Common Thift* is executed, (which is performed upon the stage,) *Falset*, (Falsehood,) who is also brought forth for punishment, pronounces over him the following elegy:

"Waes me for thee, gude Common Thift!
Was never man made more honest chift,
His living for to win:

Thair wes not, in all Liddesdaill,
That ky mair craftily could steil,
Whar thou hingis on that pin!"
PINKERTON'S *Scottish Poems*, vol. ii. p. 194.)

Sir Richard Maitland, incensed at the boldness and impunity of the thieves of Liddesdale in his time, has attacked them with keen iambics. His satire, which, I suppose, had very little effect at the time, forms No. III. of the Appendix to this Introduction.

The Borderers had, in fact, little reason to regard the inland Scots as their fellow-subjects, or to respect the power of the Crown. They were frequently resigned, by express compact, to the bloody retaliation of the English, without experiencing any assistance from their prince, and his more immediate subjects. If they beheld him, it was more frequently in the character of an avenging judge, than of a protecting sovereign. They were in truth, during the time of peace, a kind of outcasts, against whom the united powers of England and Scotland were often employed. Hence, the men of the Borders had little attachment to their monarchs, whom they termed, in derision, the Kings of Fife and Lothian; provinces which they were not legally entitled to

inhabit,[1] and which, therefore, they pillaged with as little remorse as if they had belonged to a foreign country. This strange, precarious, and adventurous mode of life, led by the Borderers, was not without its pleasures, and seems, in all probability, hardly so disagreeable to us, as the monotony of regulated society must have been to those who had been long accustomed to a state of rapine. Well has it been remarked, by the eloquent Burke, that the shifting tides of fear and hope, the flight and pursuit, the peril and escape, alternate famine and feast, of the savage and the robber, after a time render all course of slow, steady, progressive, unvaried occupation, and the prospect only of a limited mediocrity, at the end of long labour, to the last degree tame, languid, and insipid. The interesting nature of their exploits may be conceived from the account of Camden.

"What manner of cattle-stealers they are that inhabit these valleys in the Marches of both kingdoms, John Lesly, a Scotchman himself, and Bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out

[1] By an act 1587, c. 96, Borderers are expelled from the inland counties, unless they can find security for their quiet deportment.

of their own Borders, in the night, in troops, through unfrequented by-ways, and many intricate windings. All the daytime they refresh themselves and their horses in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark at those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they, in like manner, return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices, in the thickest mists and darkness, his reputation is the greater, and he is looked upon as a man of an excellent head. And they are so very cunning, that they seldom have their booty taken from them, unless sometimes, when, by the help of blood-hounds, following them exactly upon the track, they may chance to fall into the hands of their adversaries. When being taken, they have so much persuasive eloquence, and so many smooth insinuating words at command, that if they do not move their judges, nay, and even their adversaries (notwithstanding the severity of their natures) to have mercy, yet they incite them to admiration and compassion."—CAMDEN's *Britan-*

nie. (The reader is requested to compare this curious account given by Lesley, with the ballad called *Hobbie Noble.*[1])

The inroads of the Marchers, when stimulated only by the desire of plunder, were never marked with cruelty, and seldom even with bloodshed,

[1] The following tradition is also illustrative of Lesley's account. Veitch of Dawyk, a man of great strength and bravery, who flourished in the 16th century, is said by tradition to have been upon bad terms with a neighbouring proprietor, Tweedie of Drummelzier, dwelling also near the source of Tweed. By some accident a flock of Dawyk's sheep had strayed over into Drummelzier's grounds, at the time when *Dickie of the Den,* a Liddesdale outlaw, was making his rounds in Tweeddale. Seeing this flock of sheep, he drove them off without ceremony. Next morning, Veitch, perceiving his loss, summoned his servants and retainers, laid a blood-hound upon the traces of the robber, by whom they were guided for many miles, till, on the banks of Liddel, the dog stayed upon a very large hay-stack. The pursuers were a good deal surprised at the obstinate pause of the blood-hound, till Dawyk pulled down some of the hay, and discovered a large excavation, containing the robber and his spoil. He instantly flew upon Dickie, and was about to poniard him, when the marauder, with the address noticed by Lesley, protested that he would never have touched a *cloot* (hoof) of the booty, had he not taken them for Drummelzier's property. This dexterous appeal to Veitch's passions saved the life of the freebooter.

unless in the case of opposition. They held, that property was common to all who stood in want of it; but they abhorred and avoided the crime of unnecessary homicide.—LESLEY, p. 63. This was, perhaps, partly owing to the habits of intimacy betwixt the Borderers of both kingdoms, notwithstanding their mutual hostility and reciprocal depredations. A natural intercourse took place between the English and Scottish Marchers, at Border meetings, and during the short intervals of peace. They met frequently at parties of the chase and football; and it required many and strict regulations, on both sides, to prevent them from forming intermarriages, and from cultivating too close a degree of intimacy.—*Scottish Acts*, 1587, c. 105; WHARTON'S *Regulations, 6th Edward VI.* The custom, also, of paying black-mail, or protection-rent, introduced a connexion betwixt the countries; for a Scottish Borderer, taking black-mail from an English inhabitant, was not only himself bound to abstain from injuring such person, but also to maintain his quarrel, and recover his property, if carried off by others. Hence, a union arose betwixt the parties, founded upon mutual interest, which counteracted, in

many instances, the effects of national prejudice. The similarity of their manners may be inferred from that of their language. (In an old mystery, imprinted at London, 1654, a mendicant Borderer is introduced, soliciting alms of a citizen and his wife. To a question of the latter he replies, "Savying your honour, good maistress, I was born in Redesdale, in Northumberlande, and come of a wight riding surname, call'd the Robsons: gude honeste men, and true, savying a little shiftynge for theyr livyng; God help them, silly pure men." The wife answers, "What doest thou here, in this countrie? me thinke thou art a Scot by thy tongue."—*Beggar.* "Trowe me never mair then, good deam; I had rather be hanged in a withie of a cow-taile, for thei are ever fare and fause."—*Appendix to Ben Jonson's Sad Shepherd, Edit.* 1783, p. 188. From the wife's observation, as well as from the dialect of the beggar, we may infer that there was little difference between the Northumbrian and the border Scottish; a circumstance interesting in itself, and decisive of the occasional friendly intercourse among the Marchmen.) From all these combining circumstances arose the lenity of the Borderers in their incursions, and

the equivocal moderation which they sometimes observed towards each other in open war.[1]

This humanity and moderation was, on certain occasions, entirely laid aside by the Borderers.

[1] This practice of the Marchmen was observed and reprobated by Patten. "Another manner have they [*the English Borderers*] amoong them, of wearyng hankerchers roll'd about their armes, and letters brouder'd [*embroidered*] upon their cappes: they said themselves, the use thearof was that ech of them might knowe his fellowe, and thearbye the sooner assemble, or in nede to ayd one another, and such lyke respectes; howbeit thear wear of the army amoong us (some suspicious men perchance) that thought thei used them for collusion, and rather bycaus thei might be knowen to the enemie, as the enemies are knowen to them, (for thei have their markes too,) and so in conflicte either ech to spare oother, or gently eche to take other. Indede, men have been mooved the rather to thinke so, bycaus sum of their crosses [*the English red crosses*] were so narrowe, and so singly set on, that a puffe of wynde might blowe them from their breastes, and that thei wear found right often talking with the Skottish prikkers within less than their gad's [*spear's*] length asunder; and when thei perceived thei had been espied, thei have begun one to run at anoother, but so apparently perlassent [*in parley*] as the lookers on resembled their chasyng lyke the running at base in an uplondish toun, whear the match is made for a quart of good ale, or like the play in Robin Cookes scole [*a fencing school*], whear, bycaus the punies mey lerne, thei strike few strokes but by assent and appointment. I hard

In the case of deadly feud, either against an Englishman, or against any neighbouring tribe, the whole force of the offended clan was bent to avenge the death of any of their number. Their

sum men say, it did mooch augment their suspicion that wey, bycaus at the battail they saw these prikkers so badly demean them, more intending the taking of prisoners, than the surety of victorye; for while oother men fought, thei fell to their prey; that as thear wear but fewe of them but brought home his prisoner, so wear thear many that had six or seven."—PATTEN'S *Account of Somerset's Expedition, apud* DALYELL'S *Fragments*, p. 76.

It is singular that, about this very period, the same circumstances are severally animadverted upon by the strenuous Scottishman, who wrote the *Complaint of Scotland*, as well as by the English author above quoted: "There is nothing that is occasione of your adhering to the opinion of Ingland contrair your natife cuntré, bot the grit familiarite that Inglis men and Scottes hes had on baith the Boirdours, ilk ane with utheris, in merchandeis, in selling and buying hors and nolt, and scheip, outfang and infang, ilk ane amang utheris, the whilk familiarite is express contrar the lawis and consuetudis bayth of Ingland and Scotland. In auld tymis it was determit in the artiklis of the pace, be the twa wardanis of the Boirdours of Ingland and Scotland, that their should be na familiarite betwix Scottis men and Inglis men, nor marriage to be contrakit betwix them, nor conventions on holydais at gammis and plays, nor merchandres to be maid among them, nor Scottis men till enter on Inglis grond, without the king of Ingland's

vengeance not only vented itself upon the homicide and his family, but upon all his kindred, on his whole tribe; and on every one, in fine, whose death or ruin could affect him with regret.—LESLEY, p. 63; *Border Laws, passim; Scottish Acts*, 1594, c. 231. The reader will find, in the following collection, many allusions to this infernal custom, which always overcame the Marcher's general reluctance to shed human blood, and rendered him remorselessly savage.

For fidelity to their word, Lesley ascribes high praise to the inhabitants of the Scottish frontier. Robert Constable (himself a traitorous spy) describes the outlaws, who were his guides into Scotland, as men who would not hesitate to steal,

save conduct, nor Inglis men till enter on Scottis grond, without the King of Scotland's save conduct, howbeit that ther war sure pace betwix the twa realmes. But thir sevyn yeir bygane, thai statutis and artiklis of the pace are adnuilit, for ther hes been as grit familiarite, and conventions, and makyng of merchandreis, on the Boirdours, this lang tyme betwix Inglis men and Scottis men, bayth in pace and weir, as Scottismen usis amang theme selfis within the realme of Scotland: and sic familiarite hes bene the cause that the Kyng of Ingland gat intelligence with divers gentlemen of Scotland."

Complaynt of Scotland, Edin. 1801, p. 164.

yet would betray no man that trusted in them, for all the gold in Scotland or France. "They are my guides," said he; "and outlaws who might gain their pardon by surrendering me, yet I am secure of their fidelity, and have often proved it." Indeed, when an instance happened of breach of faith, the injured person, at the first Border meeting, rode through the field, displaying a glove (the pledge of faith) upon the point of his lance, and proclaiming the perfidy of the person who had broken his word. So great was the indignation of the assembly against the perjured criminal, that he was often slain by his own clan, to wipe out the disgrace he had brought on them. In the same spirit of confidence, it was not unusual to behold the victors, after an engagement, dismiss their prisoners upon parole, who never failed either to transmit the stipulated ransom, or to surrender themselves to bondage, if unable to do so. But the virtues of a barbarous people being founded, not upon moral principle, but upon the dreams of superstition, or the capricious dictates of ancient custom, can seldom be uniformly relied on. We must not, therefore, be surprised to find these very men, so true to their word in general,

using, upon other occasions, various resources of cunning and chicane, against which the Border Laws were in vain directed.

The immediate rulers of the Borders were the chiefs of the different clans, who exercised over their respective septs a dominion partly patriarchal and partly feudal. The latter bond of adherence was, however, the more slender; for, in the acts regulating the Borders, we find repeated mention of "Clannes having captaines and chieftaines, whom on they depend, oft-times against the willes of their landelordes."—(*Stat.* 1587, c. 95, *and the roll thereto annexed.*) Of course, these laws looked less to the feudal superior than to the chieftain of the name, for the restraint of the disorderly tribes; and it is repeatedly enacted, that the head of the clan should be first called upon to deliver those of his sept, who should commit any trespass, and that, on his failure to do so, he should be liable to the injured party in full redress. *Ibidem*, and *Stat.* 1574, c. 231. By the same statutes, the chieftains and landlords, presiding over Border clans, were obliged to find caution, and to grant hostages, that they would subject themselves to the due course of law. Such clans

as had no chieftain of sufficient note to enter bail for their quiet conduct, became broken men, outlawed to both nations.

From these enactments, the power of the Border chieftains may be conceived; for it had been hard and useless to have punished them for the trespass of their tribes, unless they possessed over them unlimited authority. The abodes of these petty princes by no means corresponded to the extent of their power. We do not find, on the Scottish Borders, the splendid and extensive baronial castles which graced and defended the opposite frontier. The Gothic grandeur of Alnwick, of Raby, and of Naworth, marks the wealthier and more secure state of the English nobles. The Scottish chieftain, however extensive his domains, derived no pecuniary advantage, save from such parts as he could himself cultivate or occupy. Payment of rent was hardly known on the Borders, till after the Union of 1603.[1] All

[1] Stowe, in detailing the happy consequences of the union of the crowns, observes, "that the Northern Borders became as safe, and peaceable, as any part of the entire kingdome, so as in the fourthe year of the King's reigne, as well gentlemen and others inhabiting the places aforesayde, finding the auncient waste ground to be very

that the landlord could gain, from those residing upon his estate, was their personal service in battle, their assistance in labouring the land retained in his natural possession, some petty quit rents of a nature resembling the feudal casualties, and perhaps a share in the spoil which they acquired by rapine.[1] This, with his herds of cattle and of sheep, and with the *black-mail* which he exacted from his neighbours, constituted the revenue of the chieftain; and, from funds so precarious, he could rarely spare sums to expend in strengthening or decorating his habitation. Another reason

good and fruitefull, began to contende in lawe about their bounds, challenging then, that for their hereditarie right, which formerly they disavowed, only to avoyde charge of common defence."

[1] "As for the humours of the people (*i. e.* of Teviotdale,) they were both strong and warlike, as being inured to war, and daily incursions, and the most part of the heritors of the country gave out all their lands to their tenants, for military attendance, upon rentals, and reserved only some few mainses for their own sustenance, which were laboured by their tenants, besides their service. They paid an entry, a herauld, and a small rental-duty; for there were no rents raised here that were considerable, till King James went into England; yea, all along the Border."—*Account of Roxburghshire, by* SIR WILLIAM SCOTT *of Harden, and* KERR *of Sunlaws, apud* MACFARLANE'S *MSS.*

is found, in the Scottish mode of warfare. It was early discovered, that the English surpassed their neighbours in the arts of assaulting and defending fortified places. The policy of the Scottish, therefore, deterred them from erecting upon the Borders buildings of such extent and strength, as, being once taken by the foe, would have been capable of receiving a permanent garrison.[1] To themselves, the woods and hills of their country were pointed out by the great Bruce, as their safest bulwarks; and the maxim of the Douglasses,

[1] The royal castles of Roxburgh, Hermitage, Lochmaben, &c., form a class of exceptions to this rule, being extensive and well fortified. Perhaps we ought also to except the baronial castle of Home. Yet, in 1455, the following petty garrisons were thought sufficient for the protection of the Border; two hundred spearmen, and as many archers, upon the East and Middle Marches; and one hundred spears, with a like number of bowmen, upon the Western Marches. But then the same statute provides, "That they are neare hand the Bordoure, are ordained to have gud househaldes, and abulzied men as effeiris; and to be reddie at their principal place, and to pass, with the wardanes, quhen and quhair they sall be charged."—*Act of James II.*, cap. 55, *Of garrisons to be laid upon the Borders.* —Hence Buchanan has justly described, as an attribute of the Scottish nation,

"*Nec fossis, nec muris, patriam, sed Marte tueri.*"

that, "it was better to hear the lark sing, than the mouse cheep," was adopted by every Border chief. For these combined reasons, the residence of the chieftain was commonly a large square battlemented[1] tower, called a *keep*, or *peel*, placed on a precipice, or on the banks of a torrent, and, if the ground would permit, surrounded by a moat. In short, the situation of a Border house, encompassed by woods, and rendered almost inaccessible by torrents, by rocks, or by morasses, sufficiently indicated the pursuits and apprehensions of its inhabitants. ("*Locus horroris et vastæ solitudinis, aptus ad prædam, habilis ad rapinam, habitatoribus suis lapis erat offensionis et petra scandali, utpote qui stipendiis suis minime contenti, totum de alieno, parum de suo, possidebant—totius provinciæ spolium.*") No wonder, therefore, that James V., on approaching the castle of Lochwood, the ancient seat of the Johnstones, is said

[1] I have observed a difference in architecture betwixt the English and Scottish towers. The latter usually have upon the top a projecting battlement, with interstices, anciently called *machicoules*, betwixt the parapet and the wall, through which stones or darts might be hurled upon the assailants. This kind of fortification is less common on the South Border.

to have exclaimed, "that he who built it must have been a knave in his heart." An outer wall, with some light fortifications, served as a protection for the cattle at night. The walls of these fortresses were of an immense thickness, and they could easily be defended against any small force; more especially, as, the rooms being vaulted, each story formed a separate lodgement, capable of being held out for a considerable time. On such occasions, the usual mode adopted by the assailants, was to expel the defenders, by setting fire to wet straw in the lower apartments. But the Border chieftains seldom chose to abide in person a siege of this nature; and I have scarce observed a single instance of a distinguished baron made prisoner in his own house.[1] (PATTEN'S *Expedition*, p. 35.) The common people resided in paltry huts, about the safety of which they were little anxious, as they contained nothing of value. On the approach of a superior force, they unthatched them, to prevent their being burned, and then abandoned them to the foe. (STOWE'S

[1] I ought to except the famous Dand Ker, who was made prisoner in his castle of Fairnihirst, after defending it bravely against Lord Dacres, 24th September, 1523.

Chronicle, p. 665. Their only treasures were, a fleet and active horse, with the ornaments which their rapine had procured for the females of their family, of whose gay appearance the Borderers were vain.

Some rude monuments occur upon the Borders, the memorials of ancient valour. Such is the Cross at Milholm, on the banks of the Liddle, said to have been erected in memory of the Chief of the Armstrongs, murdered treacherously by Lord Soulis, while feasting in Hermitage castle. Such also is that rude stone, now broken, and very much defaced, placed upon a mount on the lands of Haughhead, near the junction of the Kale and the Teviot. The inscription records the defence made by Hobbie Hall, a man of great strength and courage, against an attempt of the powerful family of Ker, to possess themselves of his small estate.[1]

[1] The rude strains of the inscription little correspond with the gallantry of a

——"village Hampden, who, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood."

It is in these words:—

"Here Hobbie Hall boldly maintained his right,
'Gainst reif, plain force, armed wi' awles might.

The same simplicity marked their dress and arms. Patten observes, that in battle the laird could not be distinguished from the serf; all wearing the same coat-armour, called a jack, and the baron being only distinguished by his sleeves of mail and his head-piece. The Borderers, in general, acted as light cavalry, riding horses of a small size, but astonishingly nimble, and trained to move, by short bounds, through the morasses with which Scotland abounds. Their offensive weapons were, a lance of uncommon length; a sword, either two-handed, or of the modern light size; sometimes a species of battle-axe, called a Jedburgh-staff; and, latterly, dags or pistols. Although so much accustomed to move on horseback, that they held it even mean to appear otherwise, the Marchmen occasionally acted as infantry; nor were they inferior to the rest of Scotland in forming that impenetrable phalanx of spears, whereof

> Full thirty pleughs, harnes'd in all their gear
> Could not his valiant noble heart make fear!
> But wi' his sword he cut the foremost's soam
> In two; and drove baith pleughs and ploughmen home.
> 1620."

Soam means the iron links which fasten a yoke of oxen to the plough.

it is said, by an English historian, that "sooner shall a bare finger pierce through the skin of an angry hedge-hog, than any one encounter the brunt of their pikes." At the battle of Melrose, for example, Buccleuch's army fought upon foot. But the habits of the Borderers fitted them particularly to distinguish themselves as light cavalry; and hence the name of *prickers and hobylers*, so frequently applied to them. At the blaze of their beacon fires, they were wont to assemble ten thousand horsemen in the course of a single day. Thus rapid in their warlike preparations, they were alike ready for attack and defence. Each individual carried his own provisions, consisting of a small bag of oatmeal, and trusted to plunder, or the chase, for eking out his precarious repast. Beaugué remarks, that nothing surprised the Scottish cavalry so much as to see their French auxiliaries encumbered with baggage-waggons, and attended by commissaries. Before joining battle, it seems to have been the Scottish practice to set fire to the litter of their camp, while, under cover of the smoke, the *hobylers*, or Border cavalry, executed their manœuvres.—There is a curious account of the battle of Mitton, fought in the year 1319, in

a valuable MS. *Chronicle of England*, in the collection of the Marquis of Douglas,[1] from which this stratagem seems to have decided the engagement. "In meyn time, while the wer thus lastyd, the kynge went agane into Skotlonde, that hitte was wonder for to wette, and bysechd the towne of Barwick; but the Skottes went over the water of Sold, that was iii myle from the hoste, and prively they stole away by nyghte, and come into England, and robbed and destroyed all that they myght, and spared no manner thing til that they come to Yorke. And, whan the Englischemen, that were left at home, herd this tiding, all tho that myght well travell, so well monkys and priestis, and freres, and chanouns, and seculars, come and met with the Skottes at Mytone of Swale, the xii day of October. Allas, for sorrow for the Englischemen! housbondmen, that could nothing in wer, ther were quelled and drenchyd in an arm of the see. And hyr chyftaines, Sir William Milton, Ersch-bishop of Yorke, and the Abbot of Selby, with her stedes, fled and come into Yorke; and that was her owne

[1] Now Duke of Hamilton, 1830.

folye that they had that mischaunce; for the passyd the water of Swale, and the Skottes set on fiir three stalkes of hey, and the smoke thereof was so huge, that the Englischemen might not see the Skottes; and whan the Englischemen were gon over the water, tho cam the Skottes, with hir wyng, in maner of a sheld, and come toward the Englischemen in ordour. And the Englischemen fled for unnethe they had any use of armes, for the Kyng had hem al almost lost att the sege of Barwick. And the Scotsmen *hobylers* went betwene the brigge and the Englischemen; and when the gret hoste them met, the Englischemen fled between the *hobylers* and the gret hoste; and the Englischemen wer ther quelled, and he that myght wend over the water were saved, but many were drowned. Alas! for there were slayn many men of religion, and seculars, and priestis, and clerks, and with much sorwe the Ersch-bishope scaped from the Skottes; and, therefore, the Skottes called that battel the *White Battell.*"

For smaller predatory expeditions, the Borderers had signals, and places of rendezvous, peculiar to each tribe. If the party set forward before

all the members had joined, a mark, cut in the turf, or on the bark of a tree, pointed out to the stragglers the direction which the main body had pursued.[1] Their warlike convocations were, also, frequently disguised, under pretence of meetings for the purpose of sport. The game of foot-ball, in particular, which was anciently, and still continues to be, a favourite Border sport, was the means of collecting together large bodies of moss-troopers, previous to any military exploit. When Sir Robert Carey was Warden of the East Marches, the knowledge that there was a great match at foot-ball at Kelso, to be frequented by the principal Scottish riders, was sufficient to excite his vigilance and his apprehension.[2] Previous also to the murder of Sir John Carmichael, (see Notes on the *Raid of the Reidswire*,) it appeared,

1 In the parish of Linton, in Roxburghshire, there is a circle of stones, surrounding a smooth plot of turf, called the *Tryst*, or place of appointment, which tradition avers to have been the rendezvous of the neighbouring warriors. The name of the leader was cut in the turf, and the arrangement of the letters announced to his followers the course which he had taken. See *Statistical Account of the Parish of Linton.*

2 See Appendix.

at the trial of the perpetrators, that they had assisted at a grand foot-ball meeting, where the crime was concerted.

Upon the religion of the Borderers there can very little be said. We have already noticed, that they remained attached to the Roman Catholic faith rather longer than the rest of Scotland. This probably arose from a total indifference upon the subject; for we nowhere find in their character the respect for the church, which is a marked feature of that religion. In 1528, Lord Dacre complains heavily to Cardinal Wolsey, that, having taken a notorious freebooter, called Dyk Irwen, the brother and friends of the outlaw had, in retaliation, seized a man of some property, and a relation of Lord Dacre, called Jeffrey Middleton, as he returned from a pilgrimage to St Ninian's, in Galloway; and that, notwithstanding the sanctity of his character as a *true pilgrim*, and the Scottish monarch's safe conduct, they continued to detain him in their fastnesses, until he should redeem the said arrant thief, Dyk Irwen. The abbeys, which were planted upon the Border, neither seem to have been much respected by the English, nor by the Scottish barons. They were repeat-

edly burned by the former, in the course of the Border wars, and by the latter they seem to have been regarded chiefly as the means of endowing a needy relation, or the subject of occasional plunder. (Thus, Andrew Home of Fastcastle, about 1488, attempted to procure a perpetual feu of certain possessions belonging to the Abbey of Coldinghame; and being baffled, by the King bestowing that opulent benefice upon the royal chapel at Stirling, the Humes and Hepburns started into rebellion; asserting, that the priory should be conferred upon some younger son of their families, according to ancient custom.) After the fatal battle of Flodden, one of the Kers testified his contempt for clerical immunities and privileges, by expelling from his house the Abbot of Kelso. These bickerings betwixt the clergy and the barons were usually excited by disputes about their temporal interest. It was common for the churchmen to grant lands in feu to the neighbouring gentlemen, who, becoming their vassals, were bound to assist and protect them.[1]

[1] These vassals resembled, in some degree, the Vidames in France, and the Vogten, or Vizedomen, of the German abbeys; but the system was never carried regularly into

But, as the possessions and revenues of the benefices became thus intermixed with those of the laity, any attempts rigidly to enforce the claims of the church were usually attended by the most scandalous disputes. A petty warfare was carried on for years, betwixt James, Abbot of Dryburgh, and the family of Haliburton of Mertoun, or Newmains, who held some lands from that abbey. These possessions were, under various pretexts, seized and laid waste by both parties; and some bloodshed took place in the contest, betwixt the lay vassals and their spiritual superior. The matter was, at length, thought of sufficient importance to be terminated by a reference to his Majesty; whose decree arbitral, dated at Stirling, the 8th of May, 1535, proceeds thus: "Whereas we have been advised and know the said gentlemen, the Haliburtons, to be leal and true honest men, long servants unto the saide abbeye, for the saide landis, stout men at armes, and goode Borderers against Ingland; We doe therefore decree and ordain, that they sall be repossess'd, and bruik and enjoy the landis and steedings they had

effect in Britain, and this circumstance facilitated the dissolution of the religious houses.

of the saide abbeye, paying the use and wonte: and that they sall be goode servants to the said venerabil father, like as they and their predecessours were to the said venerabil father, and his predecessours, and he a good master to them."[1] It is unnecessary to detain the reader with other instances of the discord which prevailed anciently upon the Borders, betwixt the spiritual shepherd and his untractable flock.

[1] This decree was followed by a marriage betwixt the abbot's daughter, Elizabeth Stewart, and Walter Halliburton, one of the family of Newmains. But even this alliance did not secure peace between the venerable father and his vassals. The offspring of the marriage was an only daughter, named Elizabeth Halliburton. As this young lady was her father's heir, the Halliburtons resolved that she should marry one of her cousins, to keep her property in the clan. But as this did not suit the views of the abbot, he carried off by force the intended bride, and married her, at Stirling, to Alexander Erskine, a brother of the Laird of Balgony, a relation and follower of his own. From this marriage sprung the Erskines of Shielfield. This exploit of the abbot revived the feud betwixt him and the Halliburtons, which only ended with the dissolution of the abbey.—*MS. History of Halyburton Family, penes editorem.* —[This history of the family, a principal branch of which Sir W. S. himself represented, was printed (not published) by him, with an Introduction and Notes, in 1820.—Ed.]

The Reformation was late of finding its way into the Border wilds; for, while the religious and civil dissensions were at the height in 1568, Drury writes to Cecil,—"Our trusty neighbours of Teviotdale are holden occupied only to attend to the pleasure and calling of their own heads, to make some diversion in this matter." The influence of the reformed preachers, among the Borderers, seems also to have been but small; for, upon all occasions of dispute with the kirk, James VI. was wont to call in their assistance.—CALDERWOOD, p. 129.

We learn from a curious passage in the life of Richard Cameron, a fanatical preacher during the time of what is called the "persecution," that some of the Borderers retained to a late period their indifference about religious matters. After having been licensed at Haughhead, in Teviotdale, he was, according to his biographer, sent first to preach in Annandale. "He said, 'how can I go there? I know what sort of people they are.'—'But,' Mr Welch said, 'go your way, Ritchie, and set the fire of hell to their tails.' He went; and, the first day, he preached upon that text, *How shall I put thee among the children*,

&c. In the application, he said, 'Put you among the children! the offspring of thieves and robbers! we have all heard of Annandale thieves.' Some of them got a merciful cast that day, and told afterwards, that it was the first field-meeting they ever attended, and that they went out of mere curiosity, to see a minister preach in a tent, and people sit on the ground."—*Life of Richard Cameron.*[1]

Cleland, an enthusiastic Cameronian, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment levied after the Revolution from among that wild and fanatical sect, claims for the wandering preachers of his tribe the merit of converting the Borderers. He introduces a cavalier haranguing the Highlanders, and ironically thus guarding them against the fanatic divines:

"If their doctrine there get rooting,
Then, farewell theift, the best of booting.

[1] This man was for a short time chaplain in the family of Sir Walter Scott of Harden, who attended the meetings of the indulged Presbyterians; but Cameron, considering this conduct as a compromise with the foul fiend Episcopacy, was dismissed from the family. He was slain in a skirmish at Airdsmoss, bequeathing his name to the sect of fanatics still called Cameronians.

And this ye see is very clear,
Dayly experience makes it appear;
For instance, lately on the Borders,
Where there was nought but theft and murders,
Rapine, cheating, and resetting,
Slight of hand in fortunes getting,—
Their designation, as ye ken,
Was all along the *Taking Men*.
Now, rebels more prevails with words,
Than drawgoons does with guns and swords,
So that their bare preaching now
Makes the rush-bush keep the cow,
Better than Scots or English kings
Could do by kilting them with strings.
Yea, those that were the greatest rogues,
Follows them over hills and bogues,
Crying for mercy and for preaching,
For they'll now hear no others teaching."

Cleland's Poems, 1697, p. 30.

The poet of the Whigs might exaggerate the success of their teachers; yet it must be owned, that the doctrine of insubordination, joined to their vagrant and lawless habits, was calculated strongly to conciliate Border hearers.)

But, though the church, in these frontier counties, attracted little veneration, no part of Scotland teemed with superstitious fears and obser-

vances more than they did. "The Dalesmen,"[1] says Lesley, "never count their beads with such earnestness as when they set out upon a predatory expedition." Penances, the composition betwixt guilt and conscience, were also frequent upon the Borders. Of this we have a record in many bequests to the church, and in some more lasting monuments; such as the Tower of Repentance, near Hoddam Castle, in Dumfriesshire, and, according to vulgar tradition, the church of Linton,[2] in Roxburghshire. In the Ap-

[1] An epithet bestowed upon the Borders, from the names of the various districts; as Teviotdale, Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewsdale, Annandale, &c. Hence, an old ballad distinguishes the north as the country,

"Where every river gives name to a dale."

Ex-ale-tation of Ale.

[2] This small church is founded upon a little hill of sand, in which no stone of the size of an egg is said to have been found, although the neighbouring soil is sharp and gravelly. Tradition accounts for this, by informing us, that the foundresses were two sisters, upon whose account much blood had been spilt on that spot; and that the penance imposed on the fair causers of the slaughter, was an order from the Pope to sift the sand of the hill, upon which their church was to be erected. This story may, perhaps, have some foundation; for in the churchyard was discovered a single

pendix to this Introduction, No. IV., the reader will find a curious league, or treaty of peace, betwixt two hostile clans, by which the heads of each became bound to make the four pilgrimages of Scotland, for the benefit of the souls of those of the opposite clan, who had fallen in the feud. These were superstitions, flowing immediately from the nature of the Catholic religion; but there was, upon the Border, no lack of others of a more general nature. Such was the universal belief in spells, of which some traces may yet remain in the wild parts of the country. These were common in the days of the learned Bishop Nicolson, who derives them from the time of the Pagan Danes. "This conceit was the more heightened, by reflecting upon the natural superstition of our Borderers at this day, who were much better acquainted with, and do more firmly believe, their old legendary stories, of fairies and witches, than the articles of their creed. And to convince me, yet farther, that they are not utter strangers to the black art of their forefathers, I met with a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who

grave, containing no fewer than fifty skulls, most of which bore the marks of having been cleft by violence.

showed me a book of spells and magical receipts, taken, two or three days before, in the pocket of one of our moss-troopers; wherein, among many other conjuring feats, was prescribed a certain remedy for an ague, by applying a few barbarous characters to the body of the party distempered. These, methought, were very near a-kin to Wormius's *Ram Runer*, which, he says, differed wholly in figure and shape from the common *runæ*. For, though he tells us that these *Ram Runer* were so called, *Eo quod molestias, dolores, morbosque hisce infligere inimicis soliti sunt magi*; yet his great friend, Arng. Jonas, more to our purpose, says, that—*His etiam usi sunt ad benefaciendum, medicandum tam animi quam corporis morbis; atque ad ipsos cacodæmones pellendos et fugandos.* I shall not trouble you with a draught of this spell, because I have not yet had an opportunity of learning whether it may not be an ordinary one, and to be met with, among others of the same nature, in Paracelsus, or Cornelius Agrippa."—*Letter from Bishop Nicolson to Mr Walker; vide Camden's Brittannia, Cumberland.*

Even in the Editor's younger days, he can remember the currency of certain spells, for curing

sprains, burns, or dislocations, to which popular credulity ascribed unfailing efficacy.[1] Charms, however, against spiritual enemies, were yet more common than those intended to cure corporeal complaints. This is not surprising, as a fantastic remedy well suited an imaginary disease.

There were, upon the Borders, many consecrated wells, for resorting to which the people's credulity is severely censured by a worthy physician of the seventeenth century, who himself believed in a shower of living herrings having fallen near Dumfries. "Many run superstitiously to other wells, and there obtain, as they imagine, health and advantage; and there they offer bread and cheese, or money, by throwing them into the well." In another part of the MS. occurs the following passage: "In the bounds of the lands of Eccles, belonging to a lineage of

[1] Among these may be reckoned the supposed influence of Irish earth, in curing the poison of adders, or other venomous reptiles.—This virtue is extended by popular credulity to the natives, and even to the animals, of Hibernia. A gentleman (who was educated to medicine, by the way), bitten by some reptile, so as to occasion a great swelling, seriously assured the Editor, that he ascribed his cure to putting the affected finger into the mouth of an Irish mare.

the name of Maitland, there is a loch called the Dowloch, of old resorted to with much superstition, as medicinal both for men and beasts, and that with such ceremonies, as are *shrewdly* suspected to have been begun with witchcraft, and increased afterwards by magical directions: For, burying of a cloth, or somewhat that did relate to the bodies of men and women, and a shackle, or tether, belonging to cow or horse, and these being cast into the loch, if they did float, it was taken for a good omen of recovery, and a part of the water carried to the patient, though to remote places, without saluting or speaking to any they met by the way; but, if they did sink, the recovery of the party was hopeless. This custom was of late much curbed and restrained; but since the discovery of many medicinal fountains near to the place, the vulgar, holding that it may be as medicinal as these are, at this time begin to re-assume their former practice."—*Account of Presbytery of Penpont, in Macfarlane's MSS.*)

The idea, that the spirits of the deceased return to haunt the place, where on earth they have suffered, or have rejoiced, is, as Dr Johnson has observed, common to the popular creed of all

nations.[1] The just and noble sentiment, implanted in our bosoms by the Deity, teaches us that we shall not slumber for ever, as the beasts that perish. Human vanity, or credulity, chequers, with its own inferior and baser colours, the noble prospect, which is alike held out to us by philosophy and by religion. We feel, according to the ardent expression of the poet, that we shall not wholly die;[2] but from hence we vainly and weakly argue, that the same scenes, the same passions, shall delight and actuate the disembodied spirit, which affected it while in its tenement of clay. Hence the popular belief, that the soul haunts the spot where the murdered body is interred; that its appearances are directed to bring down vengeance on its murderers; or that, having left its terrestrial form in a distant clime, it glides before its former friends, a pale spectre, to warn them of its decease. Such tales, the foundation of which is an argument from our present feelings to those of the spiritual world, form the broad and universal basis of the popular superstition regarding departed spirits; against which, reason has striven in vain, and universal experience has

[1] See Rasselas.—[2] Non omnis moriar.—Hor.

offered a disregarded testimony. These legends are peculiarly acceptable to barbarous tribes; and, on the Borders, they were received with most unbounded faith. It is true, that these supernatural adversaries were no longer opposed by the sword and battle-axe, as among the unconverted Scandinavians. Prayers, spells, and exorcisms, particularly in the Greek and Hebrew languages, were the weapons of the Borderers, or rather of their priests and cunning men, against their aërial enemy.[1] The belief in ghosts, which has been

[1] One of the most noted apparitions is supposed to haunt Spedlin's Castle near Lochmaben, the ancient baronial residence of the Jardines of Applegirth. It is said that, in exercise of his territorial jurisdiction, one of the ancient lairds had imprisoned, in the *Massy More*, or dungeon of the castle, a person named Porteous. Being called suddenly to Edinburgh, the laird discovered, as he entered the West Port, that he had brought along with him the key of the dungeon. Struck with the utmost horror, he sent back his servant to relieve the prisoner, but it was too late. The wretched being was found lying upon the steps descending from the door of the vault, starved to death. In the agonies of hunger, he had gnawed the flesh from one of his arms. That his spectre should haunt the castle, was a natural consequence of such a tragedy. Indeed, its visits became so frequent, that a clergyman of eminence was employed to exorcise it. After a contest of twenty-four hours,

well termed the last lingering phantom of superstition, still maintains its ground upon the Borders.

It is unnecessary to mention the superstitious

the man of art prevailed so far as to confine the goblin to the *Massy More* of the castle, where its shrieks and cries are still heard. A part, at least, of the spell, depends upon the preservation of the ancient black-lettered Bible, employed by the exorcist. It was some years ago thought necessary to have this Bible rebound; but as soon as it was removed from the castle, the spectre commenced his nocturnal orgies, with ten-fold noise; and it is verily believed that he would have burst from his confinement, had not the sacred volume been speedily replaced.

A Mass John Scott, minister of Peebles, is reported to have been the last renowned exorciser, and to have lost his life in a contest with an obstinate spirit. This was owing to the conceited rashness of a young clergyman, who commenced the ceremony of laying the ghost before the arrival of Mass John. It is the nature, it seems, of spirits disembodied, as well as embodied, to increase in strength and presumption, in proportion to the advantages which they may gain over the opponent. The young clergyman losing courage, the horrors of the scene were increased to such a degree, that, as Mass John approached the house in which it passed, he beheld the slates and tiles flying from the roof, as if dispersed with a whirlwind. At his entry, he perceived all the wax-tapers (the most essential instruments of conjuration) extinguished, except one, which already burned blue in the socket. The arrival of the experienced

belief in witchcraft, which gave rise to so much cruelty and persecution during the seventeenth century. There were several executions upon the Borders for this imaginary crime, which was usually tried, not by the ordinary judges, but by a set of country gentlemen, acting under commission from the Privy Council.[1].

Besides these grand articles of superstitious belief, the creed of the Borderers admitted the existence of sundry classes of subordinate spirits, to whom were assigned peculiar employments. The chief of these were the Fairies, (concerning whom the reader will find a long dissertation in Volume Second.) The Brownie formed a class of beings, distinct in habit and disposition from

sage changed the scene: he brought the spirit to reason; but unfortunately, while addressing a word of advice or censure to his rash brother, he permitted the ghost to obtain the *last word;* a circumstance which, in all colloquies of this nature, is strictly to be guarded against. This fatal oversight occasioned his falling into a lingering disorder, of which he never recovered.

A curious poem, upon the laying of a ghost, forms article No. V. of the Appendix.

[1] I have seen, *penes* Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden, the record of the trial of a witch, who was burned at Ducove. She was tried in the manner above mentioned.

the freakish and mischievous elves. He was meagre, shaggy, and wild in his appearance. Thus Cleland, in his satire against the Highlanders, compares them to

> "Faunes, or *Brownies*, if ye will,
> Or Satyres come from Atlas Hill."

In the daytime, he lurked in remote recesses of the old houses which he delighted to haunt; and, in the night, sedulously employed himself in discharging any laborious task which he thought might be acceptable to the family, to whose service he had devoted himself. His name is probably derived from the *Portuni*, whom Gervase of Tilbury describes thus:—"*Ecce enim in Anglia dæmones quosdam habent, dæmones, inquam, nescio dixerim, an secretæ et ignotæ generationis effigies, quos Galli Neptunos, Angli Portunos nominant. Istis insitum est quod simplicitatem fortunatorum colonorum amplectuntur, et cum nocturnas propter domesticas operas agunt vigilias, subito clausis januis ad ignem califiunt, et ranunculas ex sinu projectas, prunis impositas comedunt, senili vultu, facie corrugata, statura pusilli, dimidium pollicis non habentes. Panniculis concertis induuntur, et si quid gestandum in domo fuerit, aut one-*

rosi operis agendum, ad operandum se jungunt, citius humana facilitate expediunt. Idillis insitum est, ut obsequi possint et obesse non possint."—Otia. Imp. p. 980. In every respect, saving only the feeding upon frogs, which was probably an attribute of the Gallic spirits alone, the above description corresponds with that of the Scottish Brownie, whose very name is a corruption, in all probability, of Portunus.) But the Brownie, although, like Milton's lubbar fiend, he loves to stretch himself by the fire,[1] does not drudge from the hope

[1] —— "how the drudging goblin swet,
To earn the cream-bowl duly set;
When, in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-lab'rers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And, crop-full, out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings."

L'Allegro.

When the menials in a Scottish family protracted their vigils around the kitchen fire, Brownie, weary of being excluded from the midnight hearth, sometimes appeared at the door, seemed to watch their departure, and thus admonished them:—Gang a' to your beds, sirs, and dinna put out the wee *grieshoch* [embers.]"

of recompense. On the contrary, so delicate is his attachment, that the offer of reward, but particularly of food, infallibly occasions his disappearance for ever.[1] We learn from Olaus Mag-

[1] It is told of a Brownie, who haunted a Border family, now extinct, that the lady having fallen unexpectedly in labour, and the servant, who was ordered to ride to Jedburgh for the *sage-femme*, showing no great alertness in seting out, the familiar spirit slipt on the greatcoat of the lingering domestic, rode to the town on the laird's best horse, and returned with the midwife *en croupe*. During the short space of his absence, the Tweed, which they must necessarily ford, rose to a dangerous height. Brownie, who transported his charge with all the rapidity of the ghostly lover of *Lenore*, was not to be stopped by this obstacle. He plunged in with the terrified old lady, and landed her in safety where her services were wanted. Having put the horse into the stable, (where it was afterwards found in a woful plight,) he proceeded to the room of the servant, whose duty he had discharged; and, finding him just in the act of drawing on his boots, he administered to him a most merciless drubbing with his own horsewhip. Such an important service excited the gratitude of the laird; who, understanding that Brownie had been heard to express a wish to have a green coat, ordered a vestment of that colour to be made and left in his haunts. Brownie took away the green coat, but was never seen more. We may suppose, that, tired of his domestic drudgery, he went in his new livery to join the fairies.—*See Appendix*, No. VI.

nus, that spirits, somewhat similar in their operations to the Brownie, were supposed to haunt the Swedish mines. The passage, in the translation of 1658, runs thus: "This is collected in briefe, that in northerne kingdomes there are great armies of devils, that have their services, which they perform with the inhabitants of these countries: but they are most frequently in rocks and mines, where they break, cleave, and make them hollow: which also thrust in pitchers and buckets, and carefully fit wheels and screws, whereby they are drawn upwards; and they shew themselves to the labourers, when they list, like phantasms and ghosts.") It seems no improbable

The last Brownie known in Ettrick Forest, resided in Bodsbeck, a wild and solitary spot, near the head of Moffat Water, where he exercised his functions undisturbed, till the scrupulous devotion of an old lady induced her *to hire him away*, as it was termed, by placing in his haunt a porringer of milk and a piece of money. After receiving this hint to depart, he was heard the whole night to howl and cry, "Farewell to bonnie Bodsbeck!" which he was compelled to abandon for ever. 1802.

Mr Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, has written a tale, in which the Brownie of Bodsbeck is explained as being one of the fugitive Cameronians. 1830.

conjecture, that the Brownie is a legitimate descendant of the *Lar Familiaris* of the ancients.

A being, totally distinct from those hitherto mentioned, is the Bogle, or Goblin, a freakish spirit, who delights rather to perplex and frighten mankind, than either to serve, or seriously to hurt them. This is the *Esprit Follet* of the French; and *Puck*, or *Robin Goodfellow*, though enlisted by Shakspeare among the fairy band of *Oberon*, properly belongs to this class of phantoms. *Shellycoat*, a spirit, who resides in the waters, and has given his name to many a rock and stone upon the Scottish coast, belongs also to the class of bogles.[1] When he appeared, he

[1] One of his pranks is thus narrated: Two men, in a very dark night, approaching the banks of the Ettrick, heard a doleful voice from its waves repeatedly exclaim—"Lost! Lost!" They followed the sound, which seemed to be the voice of a drowning person, and, to their infinite astonishment, they found that it ascended the river. Still they continued, during a long and tempestuous night, to follow the cry of the malicious sprite; and arriving, before morning's dawn, at the very sources of the river, the voice was now heard descending the opposite side of the mountain in which they arise. The fatigued and deluded travellers now relinquished the pursuit; and had no sooner

seemed to be decked with marine productions, and, in particular, with shells, whose clattering announced his approach. From this circumstance he derived his name. He may, perhaps, be identified with the goblin of the northern English, which, in the towns and cities, Durham and Newcastle for example, had the name of *Barguest*;[1] but, in the country villages, was more frequently termed *Brag*. He usually ended his mischievous frolics with a horse-laugh.

Shellycoat must not be confounded with *Kelpy*, a water-spirit also, but of a much more powerful and malignant nature. His attributes have been the subject of a poem in Lowland Scottish, by the learned Dr Jamieson of Edinburgh, which adorns the Fourth Volume of this collection. Of

done so, than they heard Shellycoat applauding, in loud bursts of laughter, his successful roguery. The spirit was supposed particularly to haunt the old house of Gorinberry, situated on the river Hermitage, in Liddesdale.

[1] This is a sort of spirit peculiar to those towns. He has made his appearance in this very year (1809) in that of York, if the vulgar may be credited. His name is derived by Grose, from his appearing near bars or stiles, but seems rather to come from the German Bahr-Geist, or Spirit of the Bier.

Kelpy, therefore, it is unnecessary to say any thing at present.)

Of all these classes of spirits it may be, in general, observed, that their attachment was supposed to be local, and not personal. They haunted the rock, the stream, the ruined castle, without regard to the persons or families to whom the property belonged. Hence they differed entirely from that species of spirits, to whom, in the Highlands, is ascribed the guardianship, or superintendence, of a particular clan, or family of distinction; and who, perhaps yet more than the Brownie, resemble the classic household gods. Thus, in a MS. history of Moray, we are informed, that the family of Gurlinbeg is haunted by a spirit, called *Garlin Bodacher;* that of the Baron of Kinchardin, by *Lamhdearg*,[1] or Red-hand, a spectre, one of whose hands is as red as blood; that of Tullochgorm, by *May Moulach*,

[1] The following notice of Lamhdearg occurs in another account of Strathspey, *apud* Macfarlane's MSS.:—"There is much talk of a spirit called *Ly-erg*, who frequents the Glenmore. He appears with a red hand, in the habit of a soldier, and challenges men to fight with him; as lately as 1669, he fought with three brothers, one after another, who immediately thereafter died."

a female figure, whose left hand and arm were covered with hair, and who is also mentioned in *Aubrey's Miscellanies*, pp. 211, 212, as a familiar attendant upon the clan Grant. These superstitions were so ingrafted in the popular creed, that the clerical synods and presbyteries were wont to take cognizance of them.[1]

Various other superstitions, regarding magicians, spells, prophecies, &c., will claim our attention in the progress of this work.[2] For the present, therefore, taking the advice of an old Scottish rhymer, let us

[1] There is current, in some parts of Germany, a fanciful superstition concerning the *Stille Volk*, or silent people. These they suppose to be attached to houses of eminence, and to consist of a number, corresponding to that of the mortal family, each person of which has thus his representative amongst these domestic spirits. When the lady of the family has a child, the queen of the silent people is delivered in the same moment. They endeavour to give warning when danger approaches the family, assist in warding it off, and are sometimes seen to weep and wring their hands before inevitable calamity.

[2] [The reader is referred to Sir Walter Scott's Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, 1830, for a more detailed examination of most of the superstitions here alluded to.—Ed.]

"Leave bogles, brownies, gyre carlinges, and ghaists."[1]
Flyting of Polwart and Montgomerie.

The domestic economy of the Borderers next engages our attention. That the revenues of the chieftain should be expended in rude hospitality, was the natural result of his situation. His wealth consisted chiefly in herds of cattle, which were consumed by the kinsmen, vassals, and followers, who aided him to acquire and to protect them.[2]

[1] So generally were these tales of *diablerie* believed, that one William Lithgow, a *bon vivant*, who appears to have been a native, or occasional inhabitant, of Melrose, is celebrated by the pot-companion who composed his elegy, because

"He was good-company at jeists,
And wanton when he came to feists.
He scorn'd the converse of great beasts,
O'er a sheep's head;
He laugh'd at stories about ghaists;
Blyth Willie's dead!"
WATSON'S *Scottish Poems*, Edin. 1706.

[2] We may form some idea of the style of life maintained by the Border warriors, from the anecdotes, handed down by tradition, concerning Walter Scott of Harden, who flourished towards the middle of the sixteenth century. This ancient laird was a renowned freebooter, and used to ride with a numerous band of followers. The spoil, which they carried off from England, or from their neighbours,

We learn from Lesley, that the Borderers were temperate in their use of intoxicating liquors, and we are therefore left to conjecture how they occupied the time, when winter, or when accident,

was concealed in a deep and impervious glen, on the brink of which the old tower of Harden is situated. From thence the cattle were brought out, one by one, as they were wanted, to supply the rude and plentiful table of the laird. When the last bullock was killed and devoured, it was the lady's custom to place on the table a dish, which, on being uncovered, was found to contain a pair of clean spurs, a hint to the riders that they must shift for their next meal. Upon one occasion, when the village herd was driving out the cattle to pasture, the old laird heard him call loudly, *to drive out Harden's cow.* "*Harden's cow!*" echoed the affronted chief—"Is it come to that pass? by my faith, they shall sune say Harden's *kye*," (cows.) Accordingly, he sounded his bugle, mounted his horse, set out with his followers, and returned next day with "*a bow of kye, and a bassen'd* [brindled] *bull.*" On his return with this gallant prey, he passed a very large haystack. It occurred to the provident laird, that this would be extremely convenient to fodder his new stock of cattle; but as no means of transporting it were obvious, he was fain to take leave of it with this apostrophe, now proverbial: "By my soul, had ye but four feet, ye should not stand lang there!" In short, as Froissart says of a similar class of feudal robbers, nothing came amiss to them, that was not *too heavy, or too hot.* The same mode of housekeeping characterised most Border families on both sides. A MS. quoted in *History of Cumberland*, p. 466, concerning the

confined them to their habitations. The little learning which existed in the middle ages, glimmered, a dim and dying flame, in the religious houses; and even in the sixteenth century, when

Græmes of Netherby, and others of that clan, runs thus:—"They were all stark moss-troopers and arrant thieves: both to England and Scotland outlawed: yet sometimes connived at, because they gave intelligence forth of Scotland, and would raise 400 horse at any time, upon a raid of the English into Scotland." A saying is recorded of a mother of this clan to her son (which is now become proverbial,) "*Ride, Rouly,* [Rowland,] *hough's i' the pot;*" that is, the last piece of beef was in the pot, and therefore it was high time for him to go and fetch more. To such men might with justice be applied the poet's description of the Cretan warrior, translated by my friend Dr Leyden:—

"My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
With these I till, with these I sow;
With these I reap my harvest field,
The only wealth the Gods bestow:
With these I plant the purple vine,
With these I press the luscious wine.

My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
They make me lord of all below;
For he who dreads the lance to wield,
Before my shaggy shield must bow.
His lands, his vineyards, must resign;
And all that cowards have is mine."

Hybrias (ap. Athenæum.)

its beams became more widely diffused, they were far from penetrating the recesses of the Border mountains. The tales of tradition, the song, with the pipe or harp of the minstrel, were probably the sole resources against *ennui*, during the short intervals of repose from military adventure.

This brings us to the more immediate subject of the present publication.

Lesley, who dedicates to the description of Border manners a chapter, which we have already often quoted, notices particularly the taste of the Marchmen for music and ballad poetry. "*Placent admodum sibi sua musica, et rythmicis suis cantionibus, quas de majorum suorum gestis, aut ingeniosis predandi precandive stratagematibus ipsi confingunt.*"—LESLÆUS, *in capit. de moribus eorum, qui Scotiæ limites Angliam versus incolunt.* The more rude and wild the state of society, the more general and violent is the impulse received from poetry and music. The muse, whose effusions are the amusement of a very small part of a polished nation, records, in the lays of inspiration, the history, the laws, the very religion, of savages.—Where the pen and the press are want-

ing, the flow of numbers impresses upon the memory of posterity the deeds and sentiments of their forefathers. Verse is naturally connected with music; and, among a rude people, the union is seldom broken. By this natural alliance, the lays, "steeped in the stream of harmony," are more easily retained by the reciter, and produce upon his audience a more impressive effect. Hence, there has hardly been found to exist a nation so brutishly rude, as not to listen with enthusiasm to the songs of their bards, recounting the exploits of their forefathers, recording their laws and moral precepts, or hymning the praises of their deities. But where the feelings are frequently stretched to the highest pitch, by the vicissitudes of a life of danger and military adventure, this predisposition of a savage people, to admire their own rude poetry and music, is heightened, and its tone becomes peculiarly determined. It is not the peaceful Hindu at his loom, it is not the timid Esquimaux in his canoe, whom we must expect to glow at the war-song of Tyrtæus. The music and the poetry of each country must keep pace with their usual tone of mind, as well as with the state of society.

The morality of their compositions is determined by the same circumstances. Those themes are necessarily chosen by the bard, which regard the favourite exploits of the hearers; and he celebrates only those virtues which from infancy he has been taught to admire. Hence, as remarked by Lesley, the music and songs of the Borderers were of a military nature, and celebrated the valour and success of their predatory expeditions. Razing, like Shakspeare's pirate, the eighth commandment from the decalogue, the minstrels praised their chieftains for the very exploits, against which the laws of the country denounced a capital doom. An outlawed freebooter was to them a more interesting person than the King of Scotland exerting legal power to punish his depredations; and when the characters are contrasted, the latter is always represented as a ruthless and sanguinary tyrant. Spenser's description of the bards of Ireland applies, in some degree, to our ancient Border poets. "There is, among the Irish, a certain kinde of people called bardes, which are to them instead of poets; whose profession is to set forth the praises or dispraises of men, in their poems

or rhymes; the which are had in such high regard or esteem amongst them, that none dare displease them, for fear of running into reproach through their offence, and to be made infamous in the mouths of all men; for their verses are taken up with a general applause, and usually sung at all feasts and meetings, by certain other persons, whose proper function that is, who also receive, for the same, great rewardes and reputation amongst them." Spenser, having bestowed due praise upon the poets, who sung the praises of the good and virtuous, informs us, that the bards, on the contrary, "seldom use to choose unto themselves the doings of good men for the arguments of their poems; but whomsoever they finde to be most licentious of life, most bold and lawless in his doings, most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience, and rebellious disposition, him they set up and glorify in their rhythmes: him they praise to the people, and to young men make an example to follow." (—"*Eudoxus*—I marvail what kind of speeches they can find, or what faces they can put on, to praise such bad persons, as live so lawlessly and licentiously upon stealths and spoyles, as

most of them do; or how they can think that any good mind will applaud or approve the same?" In answer to this question, *Irenæus*, after remarking the giddy and restless disposition of the ill-educated youth of Ireland, which made them prompt to receive evil counsel, adds, that such a person, "if he shall find any to praise him, and to give him any encouragement, as those bards and rhythmers do, for little reward, or share of a stolen cow,[1] then waxeth he most insolent, and half-mad, with the love of himself and his own lewd deeds. And as for words to set forth such lewdness, it is not hard for them to give a goodly and painted show thereunto, borrowed even from the praises which are proper to virtue itself. As of a most notorious thief, and wicked outlaw, which had lived all his lifetime of spoils and robberies, one of their bardes,

[1] The reward of the Welsh bards, and perhaps of those upon the Border, was very similar. It was enacted by Howel Dha, that if the king's bard played before a body of warriors, upon a predatory excursion, he should receive, in recompense, the best cow which the party carried off.—*Leges Walliæ*, l. 1. cap. 19.

in his praise, will say, 'that he was none of the idle milk-sops that were brought up by the fire-side, but that most of his days he spent in arms, and valiant enterprises; that he never did eat his meat before he had won it with his sword; that he lay not all night slugging in his cabin under his mantle, but used commonly to keep others waking to defend their lives, and did light his candle at the flames of their houses to lead him in the darkness; that the day was his night, and the night his day; that he loved not to be long wooing of wenches to yield to him; but, where he came, he took by force the spoil of other men's love, and left but lamentations to their lovers; that his music was not the harp, nor lays of love, but the cries of people, and clashing of armour; and, finally, that he died, not bewailed of many, but made many wail when he died, that dearly bought his death.' Do not you think, Eudoxus, that many of these praises might be applied to men of best deserts? Yet are they all yielded to a most notable traitor, and amongst some of the Irish not smally accounted of."—*State of Ireland.*)

The same concurrence of circumstances, so well

pointed out by Spenser, as dictating the topics of the Irish bards, tuned the Border harps to the praise of an outlawed Armstrong, or Murray.

For similar reasons, flowing from the state of society, the reader must not expect to find, in the Border ballads, refined sentiment, and, far less, elegant expression; although the style of such compositions has, in modern hands, been found highly susceptible of both. But passages might be pointed out, in which the rude minstrel has melted in natural pathos, or risen into rude energy. Even where these graces are totally wanting, the interest of the stories themselves, and the curious picture of manners which they frequently present, authorize them to claim some respect from the public. But it is not the Editor's present intention to enter upon a history of Border Poetry; a subject of great difficulty, and which the extent of his information does not as yet permit him to engage in. He will, therefore, now lay before the reader the plan of the present publication; pointing out the authorities from which his materials are derived, and slightly noticing the nature of the different classes into which he has arranged them.

The MINSTRELSY of the SCOTTISH BORDER contains Three Classes of Poems:

I. HISTORICAL BALLADS.
II. ROMANTIC.
III. IMITATIONS OF THESE COMPOSITIONS BY MODERN AUTHORS.

The Historical Ballad relates events, which we either know actually to have taken place, or which, at least, making due allowance for the exaggerations of poetical tradition, we may readily conceive to have had some foundation in history. For reasons already mentioned, such ballads were early current upon the Border. Barbour informs us, that he thinks it unnecessary to rehearse the account of a victory, gained in Eskdale over the English, because

— "Whasa liks, thai may her
Young wemen, whan thai will play,
Syng it among thaim ilk day."
The Bruce, book XVI.

Godscroft also, in his history of the House of Douglas, written in the reign of James VI., alludes more than once to the ballads current

upon the Border, in which the exploits of those heroes were celebrated. Such is the passage relating to the death of William Douglas, Lord of Liddesdale, slain by the Earl of Douglas, his kinsman, his godson, and his chief.[1] Similar strains of lamentation were poured by the Border poets over the tomb of the Hero of Otterbourne; and over the unfortunate youths, who

[1] "The Lord of Liddesdale being at his pastime, hunting in Ettrick Forest, is beset by William, Earl of Douglas, and such as he had ordained for the purpose, and there assailed, wounded, and slain, beside Galeswood, in the year 1353, upon a jealousy that the Earl had conceived of him with his lady, as the report goeth: for so sayeth the old song,

> "'The Countess of Douglass out of her bower she came,
> And loudly there that she did call—
> It is for the Lord of Liddesdale,
> That I let all these tears down fall."

The song also declareth, how she did write her love-letters to Liddesdale, to dissuade him from that hunting. It tells likewise the manner of the taking of his men, and his own killing at Galeswood; and how he was carried the first night to Linden kirk, a mile from Selkirk, and was buried in the Abbey of Melrose."—GODSCROFT, vol. i. p. 144. Ed. 1743.

Some fragments of this ballad are still current, and will be found in the ensuing work.

were dragged to an ignominious death, from the very table at which they partook of the hospitality of their sovereign. The only stanza preserved of this last ballad is uncommonly animated:

"Edinburgh castle, toune, and toure,
God grant thou sink for sinne!
And that even for the black dinoure,
Erl Douglas gat therein."

Who will not regret, with the Editor, that compositions of such interest and antiquity should be now irrecoverable? But it is the nature of popular poetry, as of popular applause, perpetually to shift with the objects of the time; and it is the frail chance of recovering some old manuscript, which can alone gratify our curiosity regarding the earlier efforts of the Border Muse. Some of her later strains, composed during the sixteenth century, have survived even to the present day; but the recollection of them has, of late years, become like that of a "tale which was told." In the sixteenth century, these northern tales appear to have been popular even in London; for the learned Mr Ritson has obligingly pointed out to me the following passages, respecting the noted ballad of *Dick o' the Cow;*

"Dick o' the Cow, that mad demi-lance Northern Borderer, who plaid his prizes with the Lord Jockey so bravely."—NASHE's *Have with you to Saffren-Walden, or Gabriell Harvey's Hunt is up.*—1596, 4to. *Epistle Dedicdtorie, sig.* A. 2. 6. And in a list of books, printed for, and sold by, P. Brocksby (1668,) occurs "Dick-a-the-Cow, containing north country songs."[1] Could this collection have been found, it would probably have thrown much light on the present publication; but the Editor has been obliged to draw his materials chiefly from oral tradition.

Something may be still found in the Border cottages, resembling the scene described by Pennicuick:—

> "On a winter's night my grannum spinning,
> To mak a web of good Scots linen;

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[1] The Selkirkshire ballad of *Tamlane* seems also to have been well known in England. Among the popular heroes of romance, enumerated in the introduction to the history of "*Tom Thumbe*," (London, 1621, bl. letter,) occurs "Tom a Lin, the devil's supposed bastard." There is a parody upon the same ballad in the "*Pinder of Wakefield*," (London, 1621.)

Her stool being placed next to the chimley,
(For she was auld, and saw right dimly,)
My lucky-dad, an honest whig,
Was telling tales of Bothwell-brig;
He could not miss to mind the attempt,
For he was sitting pu'ing hemp;
My aunt, whom nane dare say has no grace,
Was reading in the Pilgrim's Progress;
The meikle tasker, Davie Dallas,
Was telling blads of William Wallace;
My mither bade her second son say,
What he'd by heart of Davie Lindsay:
Our herd, whom all folks hate that knows him,
Was busy hunting in his bosom;
* * * * * *
The bairns and oyes were all within doors:
The youngest of us chewing cinders,
And all the auld anes telling wonders."

PENNICUICK'S *Poems*, p. 7.

The causes of the preservation of these songs have either entirely ceased, or are gradually decaying. Whether they were originally the composition of minstrels, professing the joint arts of poetry and music; or whether they were the occasional effusions of some self-taught bard, is a question into which I do not here mean to enquire. But it is certain, that, till a very late period, the pipers, of whom there was one attached to each Border town of note, and whose office

was often hereditary, were the great depositaries of oral, and particularly of poetical, tradition. About spring time, and after harvest, it was the custom of these musicians to make a progress through a particular district of the country. The music and the tale repaid their lodging, and they were usually gratified with a donation of seed corn.[1] This order of minstrels is alluded to in the comic song of *Maggy Lauder*, who thus addresses a piper—

"Live ye upo' the Border?"

By means of these men, much traditional poe-

[1] These town-pipers, an institution of great antiquity upon the Borders, were certainly the last remains of the minstrel race. Robin Hastie, town piper of Jedburgh, perhaps the last of the order, died nine or ten years ago: his family was supposed to have held the office for about three centuries. Old age had rendered Robin a wretched performer; but he knew several old songs and tunes, which have probably died along with him. The town-pipers received a livery and salary from the community to which they belonged; and, in some burghs, they had a small allotment of land, called the Piper's Croft. For further particulars regarding them, see *Introduction to Complaynt of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1801, p. 142. (1802.)

try was preserved, which must otherwise have perished. Other itinerants, not professed musicians, found their welcome to their night's quarters readily ensured by their knowledge in legendary lore. John Græme, of Sowport, in Cumberland, commonly called *The Long Quaker*,[1] a person of this latter description, was very lately alive; and several of the songs, now published, have been taken down from his recitation. The shepherds also, and aged persons, in the recesses of the Border mountains, frequently remember and repeat the warlike songs of their fathers. This is more especially the case in what are called the South Highlands, where, in many instances, the same families have occupied the same possessions for centuries.

[1] This person, perhaps the last of our professed ballad reciters, died since the publication of the first edition of this work. He was by profession an itinerant cleaner of clocks and watches; but a stentorian voice, and tenacious memory, qualified him eminently for remembering accurately, and reciting with energy, the Border gathering songs and tales of war. His memory was latterly much impaired; yet, the number of verses which he could pour forth, and the animation of his tone and gesture, formed a most extraordinary contrast to his extreme feebleness of person, and dotage of mind. (1810.)

It is chiefly from this latter source that the Editor has drawn his materials, most of which were collected many years ago, during his early youth.[1] But he has been enabled, in many instances, to supply and correct the deficiencies of his own copies, from a collection of Border songs, frequently referred to in the work, under the title of *Glenriddell's MS.* This was compiled from various sources, by the late Mr Riddell of Glenriddell, a sedulous Border antiquary, and, since his death, has become the property of Mr Jollie, bookseller at Carlisle, to whose liberality the Editor owes the use of it, while preparing this work for the press. No liberties have been taken, either with the recited or written copies of these ballads, farther than that, where they disagreed, which is by no means unusual, the Editor, in justice to the author, has uniformly preserved what seemed to him the best or most poetical reading of the passage. Such discrepancies must very

[1] [There is in the library at Abbotsford a collection of ballads, partly printed broadsides, partly in MS., in six small volumes, which, from the handwriting, must have been formed by Sir Walter Scott while he was attending the earlier classes of Edinburgh College.—Ed.]

frequently occur, wherever poetry is preserved by oral tradition; for the reciter, making it a uniform principle to proceed at all hazards, is very often, when his memory fails him, apt to substitute large portions from some other tale, altogether distinct from that which he has commenced. Besides, the prejudices of clans and of districts have occasioned variations in the mode of telling the same story. Some arrangement was also occasionally necessary, to recover the rhyme, which was often, by the ignorance of the reciters, transposed, or thrown into the middle of the line. With these freedoms, which were essentially necessary, to remove obvious corruptions, and fit the ballads for the press, the Editor presents them to the public, under the complete assurance that they carry with them the most indisputable marks of their authenticity.

The same observations apply to the Second Class, here termed ROMANTIC BALLADS, intended to comprehend such legends as are current upon the Border, relating to fictitious and marvellous adventures. Such were the tales with which the friends of Spenser strove to beguile his indisposition :—

"Some told of ladies, and their paramours;
Some of brave knights, and their renowned squires;
Some of the fairies, and their strange attires,
And some of giants, hard to be believed."

These, carrying with them a general, and not merely a local interest, are much more extensively known among the peasantry of Scotland than the Border-raid ballads, the fame of which is in general confined to the mountains where they were originally composed. Hence, it has been easy to collect these tales of romance, to a number much greater than the Editor has chosen to insert in this publication.[1] With this class are now intermingled some lyric pieces, and some ballads, which, though narrating real events, have no direct reference to Border history or manners. To the politeness and liberality of Mr Herd of

[1] Mr Robert Jamieson, of Macclesfield, a gentleman of literary and poetical accomplishments, was, for some years, employed in a compilation of Scottish ballad poetry, which was published in 1806. I therefore, as far as the nature of my work permitted, sedulously avoided anticipating any of his materials: and the curious reader will find in his collection some important light on the history of Scottish Song, derived from comparing it with the ballad of the Scandinavians. 1810

Edinburgh, who put forth the first classical collection of Scottish songs and ballads, the Editor is indebted for the use of his MSS., containing songs and ballads, published and unpublished, to the number of ninety and upwards. To this collection frequent references are made in the course of the following pages. Two books of ballads, in MS., have also been communicated to me by my learned and respected friend, Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq.[1] I take the liberty of transcribing Mr Tytler's memorandum respecting the manner in which they came into his hands. "My father[2] got the following songs from an old friend, Mr Thomas Gordon, Professor of Philosophy in King's College, Aberdeen. The following extract of a letter of the Professor to me explains how he came by them:—'An aunt of my children, Mrs Farquhar, now dead, who was married to the proprietor of a small estate, near the sources of the Dee, in Braemar, a good old woman, who

[1] Now a senator of the College of Justice, by the title of Lord Woodhouselee. 1810.—Now deceased. 1820.

[2] William Tytler, Esq. the ingenious defender of Queen Mary, and author of a *Dissertation upon Scottish Music*, which does honour to his memory.

had spent the best part of her life among flocks and herds, resided in her latter days in the town of Aberdeen. She was possessed of a most tenacious memory, which retained all the songs she had heard from nurses and country-women in that sequestered part of the country. Being maternally fond of my children, when young, she had them much about her, and delighted them with her songs and tales of chivalry. My youngest daughter, Mrs Brown, at Falkland, is blest with a memory as good as her aunt, and has almost the whole of her songs by heart. In conversation, I mentioned them to your father, at whose request my grandson, Mr Scott, wrote down a parcel of them as his aunt sung them. Being then but a mere novice in music, he added, in the copy, such musical notes as, he supposed, might give your father some notion of the airs, or rather lilts, to which they were sung.' "

From this curious and valuable collection, the Editor has procured very material assistance. At the same time, it contains many beautiful legendary poems, of which he could not avail himself, as they seemed to be the exclusive property of the bards of Angus and Aberdeenshire. But the

copies of such as were known on the Borders, have furnished him with various readings, and with supplementary stanzas, which he has frequent opportunities to acknowledge. The MSS. are cited under the name of Mrs Brown of Falkland, the ingenious lady, to whose taste and memory the world is indebted for the preservation of the tales which they contain.[1] The other

[1] [To this lady, Mr Jamieson also acknowledges his obligations for similar assistance, in the following terms:—

"For the groundwork of this collection, and for the greater and more valuable part of the popular and romantic tales which it contains, the public are indebted to Mrs Brown of Falkland. Besides the large supply of ballads, taken down from her own recitation many years ago, by Professor Scott of Aberdeen—in 1800, I paid an unexpected visit to Mrs Brown, at Dysart, where she then happened to be for health, and wrote down, from her unpremeditated repetition, about a dozen pieces more, most of which will be found in my work. Several others, which I had not time to take down, were afterwards transmitted to me by Mrs Brown herself, and by her late highly respectable and worthy husband, the Rev. Dr Brown. Every person who peruses the following sheets, will see how much I owe to Mrs Brown, and to her nephew, my much-esteemed friend, Professor Scott; and it rests with me to feel, that I owe them much more for the zeal and spirit which they have manifested, than even for the valuable communications which they have made.

authorities, which occur during the work, are particularly referred to. Much information has been communicated to the Editor, from various quarters, since the work was first published, of which he has availed himself, to correct and enlarge the subsequent editions.

In publishing both classes of Ancient Ballads, the Editor has excluded those which are to be found in the common collections of this nature,

"As to the *authenticity* of the pieces themselves, they are as authentic as traditionary poetry can be expected to be; and their being more entire than most other such pieces are found to be, may be easily accounted for, from the circumstance that there are few persons of Mrs Brown's abilities and education, that repeat popular ballads from memory. She learnt most of them before she was twelve years old, from old women and maid-servants: What she once learnt she never forgot; and such were her curiosity and industry, that she was not contented with merely knowing the story, according to one way of telling, but studied to acquire all the varieties of the same tale which she could meet with. In some instances, these different readings may have insensibly mixed with each other, and produced, from various disjointed fragments, a whole, such as reciters, whose memories and judgments are less perfect, can seldom produce: but this must be the case in all poetry, which depends for its authenticity on oral tradition alone."—*Preface to Jamieson's Ballads.*]

unless in one or two instances, where he conceived it possible to give some novelty, by historical or critical illustration.

It would have been easy for the Editor to have given these songs an appearance of more indisputable antiquity, by adopting the rude orthography of the period to which he is inclined to refer them. But this (unless when MSS. of antiquity can be referred to) seemed too, arbitrary an exertion of the privileges of a publisher, and must, besides, have unnecessarily increased the difficulties of many readers. On the other hand, the utmost care has been taken, never to reject a word or phrase, used by a reciter, however uncouth or antiquated. Such barbarisms, which stamp upon the tales their age and their nation, should be respected by an editor, as the hardy emblem of his country was venerated by the Poet of Scotland:

> "The rough bur-thistle spreading wide
> Amang the bearded beer,
> I turned the weeder-clips aside,
> And spared the symbol dear."
>
> BURNS.

The meaning of such obsolete words is usually

given at the bottom of the page. For explanation of the more common peculiarities of the Scottish dialect, the English reader is referred to the excellent glossary annexed to the best editions of Burns's works.

The Third Class of Ballads are announced to the public, as MODERN IMITATIONS of the Ancient style of composition, in that department of poetry; and they are founded upon such traditions, as we may suppose in the elder times would have employed the harps of the minstrels. This kind of poetry has been supposed capable of uniting the vigorous numbers and wild fiction, which occasionally charm us in the ancient ballad, with a greater equality of versification, and elegance of sentiment, than we can expect to find in the works of a rude age. But upon my ideas of the nature and difficulty of such imitations, I ought in prudence to be silent; lest I resemble the dwarf, who brought with him a standard to measure his own stature. I may, however, hint at the difference, not always attended to, betwixt the legendary poems and real imitations of the old ballad; the reader will find specimens of both in the modern part of this collection. The le-

gendary poem, called *Glenfinlas*, and the ballad, entitled the *Eve of St John*, were designed as examples of the difference betwixt these two kinds of composition.

It would have the appearance of personal vanity, were the Editor to detail the assistance and encouragement which he has received, during his undertaking, from some of the first literary characters of our age. The names of Steuart, Mackenzie, Ellis, Currie, and Ritson, with many others, are talismans too powerful to be used, for bespeaking the world's favour to a collection of old songs; even although a veteran bard has remarked, "that both the great poet of Italian rhyme, Petrarch, and our Chaucer, and other of the upper house of the Muses, have thought their canzons honoured in the title of a ballad." To my ingenious friend, Dr John Leyden,[1] my readers will at once perceive that I lie under extensive obligations, for the poetical pieces with which he has permitted me to decorate my compilation; but I am yet further indebted to him

[1] Now, to the great loss of literature, and of his friends, no more. 1820.

for his uniform assistance, in collecting and arranging materials for the work.[1]

In the Notes and occasional Dissertations, it has been my object to throw together, perhaps without a sufficient attention to method, a variety of remarks, regarding popular superstitions, and

[1] ["In 1801, when Mr Lewis published his *Tales of Wonder*, Leyden was a contributor to that collection, and furnished the ballad of the Elf-King. And in the following year, he employed himself earnestly in the congenial task of procuring materials for the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the first publication of the Editor of that collection. In this labour, he was equally interested by friendship for the Editor, and by his own patriotic zeal for the honour of the Scottish Borders, and both may be judged of from the following circumstance. An interesting fragment had been obtained of an ancient historical ballad, but the remainder, to the great disturbance of the Editor and his coadjutor, was not to be recovered. Two days afterwards, while the Editor was sitting with some company after dinner, a sound was heard at a distance like that of the whistling of a tempest through the torn rigging of the vessel which scuds before it. The sounds increased as they approached more near, and Leyden, (to the great astonishment of such of the guests as did not know him) burst into the room, chanting the desiderated ballad, with the most enthusiastic gesture, and all the energy of the saw-tones of his voice, already commemorated. It turned out, that he had walked between forty and fifty miles, and back again, for the sole purpose of visiting an old person

legendary history, which, if not now collected, must soon have been totally forgotten. By such efforts, feeble as they are, I may contribute somewhat to the history of my native country; the peculiar features of whose manners and character are daily melting and dissolving into those of her sister and ally. And, trivial as may appear such an offering to the manes of a kingdom, once proud and independent, I hang it upon her altar with a mixture of feelings which I shall not attempt to describe.

"Hail, Land of spearmen! seed of those who scorn'd
To stoop the proud crest to Imperial Rome!
Hail! dearest half of Albion, sea-wall'd!
Hail! state unconquer'd by the fire of war,

---

who possessed this precious remnant of antiquity. His antiquarian researches and poetic talents were also liberally exerted for the support of this undertaking. To the former, the reader owes, in a great measure, the Dissertation on Fairy Superstition, which, although arranged and digested by the Editor, abounds with instances of such curious reading as Leyden alone had read, and was originally compiled by him; and to the latter, the spirited ballads entitled Lord Soulis, and the Court of Keeldar."—*Biographical Memoir of Dr Leyden, in Sir Walter Scott's Miscellaneous Prose Works.*]

Red war, that twenty ages round thee blazed!
To thee, for whom my purest raptures flow,
Kneeling with filial homage, I devote
My life, my strength, my first and latest song."[1]

1 [From *Albania*, (1742,) whose author has never been discovered. This poem was a great favourite with Sir Walter Scott, who often read it aloud in his evening circle. He used *to say* it was most likely the early effort of some gentleman, who, rising subsequently to eminence in a grave profession, was afraid of confessing that he had ever indulged in the light sin of verse. The original thin folio is very rare—but Dr Leyden reprinted the piece in his "Scottish Descriptive Poems," 1803, 12mo.—Ed.]

APPENDIX No. I.

LETTER

FROM

THE EARL OF SURREY, TO HENRY VIII.

GIVING AN ACCOUNT

OF THE STORM OF JEDBURGH.

Cott. MSS. Calig. B. III. Fol. 29.'

"PLEISITH it your grace to be advertised, that upon Fridaye, at x a clok at nyght, I retourned to this towne and all the garnysons to their places assigned, the bushopricke men, my Lorde of Westmoreland, and my Lorde Dacre, in likewise, every man home with their companys, without loss of any men, thanked be God; saving viii or x slayne, and dyvers hurt, at skyrmyshis and saults of the town of Gedwurth, and the fortereis-sis; which towne is soo surely brent that no garnysons ner none other shal bee lodged there, unto the time it bee newe buylded; the brennyng whereof I comytted

to twoo sure men, Sir William Bulmer, and Thomas Tempeste. The towne was much better than I went [*i. e.* ween'd] it had been, for there was twoo tymys moo houses therein then in Berwicke, and well buylded, with many honest and fair houses therein, sufficiente to have lodged M horsemen in garnyson, and six good towres therein; which towne and towres be clenely destroyed, brent, and throwen down. Undoubtedly there was noo journey made into Scotlande, in noo manys day levying, with soo fewe a nombre, that is recownted to be soo high an enterprise as this, bothe with theis contremen, and Scottishmen, nor of truthe so much hurte doon. But in th' ende a great mysfortune ded fal, onely by foly, that such ordre, as was commanded by me to be kepte, was not observed, the manner whereof hereaftir shall ensue. Bifore myn entred into Scotland, I appointed Sir William Bulmer and Sir William Evers too be marshallis of th' army; Sir William Bulmer for the vanguard, and Sir William Evers for the rereguard. In the vanguard I appointed my Lord of Westmoreland, as chief, with all the bushopricke, Sir William Bulmer, Sir William Evers, my Lord Dacre, with all his company; and with me remayned all the rest of the garnysons, and the Northumberland men. I was of counsall with the marshallis at th' ordering of our lodging, and our campe was soo well envirowned with ordynance, carts, and dikes, that hard it was to entre or issue but at certain places appointed for that purpos, and assigned the mooste com-

modious place of the said campe for my Lord Dacre his company, next the water, and next my Lord of Westmoreland. And at suche tyme as my Lord Dacre came into the felde, I being at the sault of th' abby, which contynued unto twoo houres within nyght, my seid Lord Dacre wolde in no wise bee contente to ly within the camp, whiche was made right sure, but lodged himself without, wherewith, at my returne, I was not contente, but then it was too late to remove; the next daye I sente my seid Lord Dacre to a stronghold, called Fernherste, the lord whereof was his mortal enemy; and wyth him, Sir Arthur Darcy, Sir Marmaduke Constable, with viii c of their men, one cortoute, and dyvers other good peces of ordynance for the feld (the seid Fernherste stode marvelous strongly, within a grete woode;) the seid twoo knights, with the most part of their men, and Strickland, your grace's servaunte, with my Kendall men, went into the woode on fote, with th' ordynance, where the said Kendall men were so handled, that they found hardy men, that went noo foote back for theym; the other two knightes were also soo sharply assayled, that they were enforced to call for moo of their men; and yet could not bring the ordynance to the fortress, unto the tyme my Lord Dacre, with part of his horsemen, lighted on fote; and marvelously hardly handled himself, and fynally, with long skirmyshing, and moche difficultie, gat forthe th' ordynance within the howse, and threwe down the same. At which skyrmyshe, my seid Lord

Dacre, and his brother, Sir Cristofer, Sir Arthure, and Sir Marmaduke, and many other gentilmen, did marvellously hardly; and found the best resistance that hath been seen with my comying to their parties, and above xxxii Scottis sleyne, and not passing iiij Englishmen, but above xl hurt. Aftir that, my said lord returnyng to the camp, wold in no wise bee lodged in the same, but where he lay the furst nyght. And he being with me at souper, about viij a clok, the horses of his company brak lowse, and sodenly ran out of his feld, in such nombre, that it caused a marvellous alarome in our feld; and our standing watche being set, the horses cam ronnyng along the campe, at whome were shot above one hundred shief of arrowes, and dyvers gonnys, thinking they had been Scots, that wold have saulted the campe; fynally, the horses were so madde, that they ran like wild dere into the feld, above xv c at the leest, in dyvers companys; and, in one place, above L felle downe a grete rok, and slew theymself, and above ij c ran into the towne being on fire, and by the women taken, and carried awaye right evill brent, and many were taken agayne. But, finally, by that I can esteme by the nombre of theym that I saw goo on foote the next daye, I think thare is lost above viij c horses, and all with foly for lak of not lying within the camp. I dare not write the wondres that my Lord Dacre, and all his company, doo saye theye sawe that nyght, vj tyms of spirits, and fereful sights. And unyversally all their company saye

playnly, the devil was that nyght among theym vi tymys; which mysfortune hath blemyshed the best journey that was made in Scotland many yeres. I assure your grace I found the Scottes, at this tyme, the boldest men and the hotest, that ever I sawe any nation; and all the journey, upon all parts of th' armye, kepte us with soo continuall skyrmyshe, that I never saw the like. If they might assemble xl M as good men as I nowe sawe xv c or ij M, it wold be a hard encountre to mete theym. Pitie it is of my Lord Dacres losse of the horses of his company; he brought with hym above iiij M men, and came and lodged one night in Scotland, in his moost mortal enemy's contre. There is noo herdyer, ner bettir knight, but often tyme he doth not use the most sure order, which he hath nowe payd derely for. Written at Berwike the xxvij of September.

"Your most bownden,

"T. SURREY."

APPENDIX No. II.

HISTORY OF GEORDIE BOURNE.

In the following passage, extracted from the Memoirs of Sir Robert Carey, then deputy of his father, Lord Hunsdon, Warden of the East Marches, afterwards Earl of Monmouth, the reader will find a lively illustration of the sketch of Border manners in the preceding Introduction.

"Having thus ended with my brother, I then beganne to thinke of the charge I had taken upon mee, which was the government of the East March in my father's absence. I wrote to Sir Robert Kerr,[1] who was my opposite warden, a brave active young man, and desired him that hee would appoint a day, when hee and myselfe might privately meet in some part of the Border, to take some good order for the quieting the Borders, till my retourne from London, which jour-

[1] Sir Robert Kerr of Cessford, Warden of the Middle Marches, and ancestor of the house of Roxburghe.

ney I was shortly of necessity to take. Hee stayed my man all night, and wrote to mee back, that hee was glad to have the happinesse to be acquainted with mee, and did not doubt but the country would be better governed by our good agreements. I wrote to him on the Monday, and the Thursday after hee appointed the place and hour of meeting.

" After hee had filled my man with drinke, and put him to bed, hee, and some half a score with him, got to horse, and came into England to a little village. There hee broke up a house, and tooke out a poor fellow, who (hee pretended) had done him some wrong, and before the doore cruelly murthered him, and so came quietly home, and went to bed. The next morning hee delivered my man a letter in answer to mine, and retourned him to mee. It pleased me well at the reading of his kinde letter; but when I heard what a brave hee had put upon me, I quickly resolved what to do, which was, never to have to do with him till I was righted for the greate wrong hee had done mee. Upon this resolution, the day I should have mett with him, I tooke post, and with all the haste I could, rode to London, leaving him to attend my coming to him as was appointed. There hee stayed from one till five, but heard no news of mee. Finding by this that I had neglected him, he retourned home to his house, and so things rested (with great dislike the one of the other) till I came back, which was with all the speede I could, my businesse beingended. The first thing

I did after my retourne, was to ask justice for the wrong hee had done mee; but I could get none. The Borderers, seeing our disagreement, they thought the time wished for of them was come. The winter being begunne, their was roades made out of Scotland into the East March, and goods were taken three or four times a-weeke. I had no other meanes left to quiet them, but still sent out of the garrison horsemen of Barwicke, to watch in the fittest places for them, and it was their good hap many times to light upon them, with the stolen goods driving before them. They were no sooner brought before mee, but a jury went upon them, and being found guilty, they were presently hanged; a course which hath been seldom used, but I had no way to keep the country quiet but so to do; for, when the Scotch theeves found what a sharp course I tooke with them that were found with the bloody hand, I had in a short time the country more quiet. All this while wee were but in jest, as it were, but now beganne the great quarrell betweene us.

"There was a favourite of his, a greate theife, called Geordie Bourne. This gallant, with some of his associates, would, in a bravery, come and take goods in the East March. I had that night some of the garrison abroad. They met with this Geordie and his fellows, driving of cattle before them. The garrison set upon them, and with a shott killed Geordie Bourne's unckle, and hee himselfe, bravely resisting till he was sore hurt in the head, was taken. After hee was taken,

his pride was such, as hee asked, who it was that durst avow that nightes work? but when hee heard it was the garrison, hee was then more quiet. But so powerfull and so awfull was this Sir Robert Kerr, and his favourites, as there was not a gentleman in all the East March that durst offend them. Presently after hee was taken, I had most of the gentlemen of the March come to mee, and told mee, that nowe I had the ball at my foote, and might bring Sir Robert Kerr to what conditions I pleased; for that this man's life was so neere and deare unto him, as I should have all that my heart could desire, for the good and quiet of the country and myselfe, if upon any condition I would give him his life. I heard them and their reasons; notwithstanding, I called a jury the next morning, and hee was found guilty of MARCH TREASON. Then they feared that I would cause him to be executed that afternoone, which made them come flocking to mee, humbly entreating mee, that I would spare his life till the next day, and if Sir Robert Kerr came not himselfe to mee, and made me not such proffers, as I could not but accept, that then I should do with him what I pleased. And further, they told mee plainly, that if I should execute him before I had heard from Sir Robert Kerr, they must be forced to quit their houses, and fly the country; for his fury would be such, against mee and the March I commanded, as hee would use all his power and strength to the utter destruction of the East March. They were so earnest

with mee, that I gave them my word hee should not dye that day. There was post upon post sent to Sir Robert Kerr, and some of them rode to him themselves, to advertise him in what danger Geordie Bourne was; how hee was condemned, and should have been executed that afternoone, but, by their humble suit, I gave them my word, that hee should not dye that day; and therefore besought him that hee would send to mee, with all the speede hee could, to let mee know that hee would be the next day with mee to offer mee good conditions for the safety of his life.

"When all things were quiet, and the watch set at night, after supper, about ten of the clock, I tooke one of my men's liveryes, and put it about mee, and tooke two other of my servants with mee in their liveryes, and we three, as the warden's men, came to the provost marshall's, where Bourne was, and were lett into his chamber. Wee sate down by him, and told him that wee were desirous to see him, because we heard hee was stout and valiant, and true to his friend, and that wee were sorry our master could not be moved to save his life. He voluntarily of himselfe said, that hee had lived long enough to do so many villainies as hee had done; and withal told us, that he had layne with about forty men's wives, what in England, and what in Scotland; and, that he had killed seven Englishmen with his own hands, cruelly murthering them; that hee had spent his whole life in whoring, drinking, stealing, and taking deep re-

venge for slight offences. He seemed to be very penitent, and much desired a minister for the comforte of his soule. Wee promised him to lett our master know his desire, who, wee knew, would presently grant it. Wee took our leaves of him, and presently I tooke order, that Mr Selby, a very worthy honest preacher, should go to him, and not stirre from him till his execution the next morning; for, after I had heard his own confession, I was resolved no conditions should savé his life: and so tooke order, that at the gates opening the next morning, hee should be carried to execution, which accordingly was performed. The next morning I had one from Sir Robert Kerr for a parley, who was within two miles staying for me. I sent him word, 'I would meet him where hee pleased, but I would first know upon what terms and conditions.' Before his man was returned, hee had heard, that in the morning, very early, Geordie Bourne had been executed. Many vowes he made of cruell revenge, and returned home full of grief and disdaine, and from that time forward still plotted revenge. Hee knew the gentlemen of the country were altogether sacklesse, and to make open road upon the March would but show his malice, and lay him open to the punishment due to such offences. But his practice was how to be revenged on me, or some of mine.

"It was not long after, that my brother and I had intelligence that there was a great match made at foteball, and the chiefe ryders were to be there. The

place they were to meet at was Kelsy, and that day wee heard it was the day for the meeting. Wee presently called a counsaile, and after much dispute, it was concluded, that the likeliest place he was to come to, was to kill the scoutes. And it was the more suspected, for that my brother, before my coming to the office, for the cattaile stolne out of the bounds, and, as it were, from under the walles of Barwicke, being refused justice (upon his complaint), or at least delaid, sent off the garrison into Liddesdale, and killed there the chief offender, which had done the wrong.

"Upon this conclusion, there was order taken, that both horse and foote should lye in ambush in diverse parts of the boundes, to defend the scoutes, and to give a sound blow to Sir Robert and his company. Before the horse and foote were sett out with directions what to do, it was almost dark night, and the gates ready to be lockt. Wee parted, and as I was by myselfe, comeing to my house, God put it into my mind, that it might well be, hee meant destruction to my men that I had sent out to gather tithes for mee at Norham, and their rendezvous was every night to lye and sup at an ale-house in Norham. I presently caused my page to take horse, and to ride as fast as his horse could carry him, and to command my servants (which were in all eight) that, presently upon his coming to them, they should all change their lodging, and go streight to the castle, there to lye that night in strawe and hay. Some of them were unwilling thereto, but

durst not disobey; so altogether left their ale-house, and retired to the castle. They had not well settled themselves to sleep, but they heard in the town a great alarm; for Sir Robert and his company came straight to the ale-house, broke open the doors, and made enquiry for my servants. They were answered, that by my command they were all in the castle. After they had searched all the house, and found none, they feared they were betrayed, and, with all the speede they could, made haste homewards again. Thus God blessed me from this bloody tragedy.

"All the whole March expected nightly some hurt to be done; but God so blessed mee and the government I held, as, for all his fury, hee never drew drop of blood in all my March, neither durst his theeves trouble it much with stealing, for fear of hanging, if they were taken. Thus wee continued a yeare, and then God sent a meanes to bring things to better quiet by this occasion.

"There had been commissioners in Barwicke, chosen by the Queene and King of Scottes, for the better quieting of our Borders. By their industry they found a great number of malefactors guilty, both in England and Scotland; and they tooke order, that the officers of Scotland should deliver such offenders, as were found guilty in their jurisdictions, to the opposite officers in England, to be detained prisoners, till they had made satisfaction for the goods they had taken out of England. The like order was taken with the Wardens

of England, and days prefixed for the delivery of them all. And in case any of the officers, on either side, should omit their duties, in not delivering the prisoners at the dayes and places appointed, that then there should a course be taken by the soveraignes, that what chiefe officer soever should offend herein, hee himself should be delivered and detained, till hee had made good what the commissioners had agreed upon.

"The English officers did punctually, at the day and place, deliver their prisoners, and so did most of the officers of Scotland; only the Lord of Bocleuch and Sir Robert Kerr were faultie. They were complained of, and new days appointed for the delivery of their prisoners. Bocleuch was the first that should deliver; and hee failing, entered himself prisoner into Barwicke, there to remaine till those officers under his charge were delivered to free him. Hee chose for his guardian Sir William Selby, master of the ordnance at Barwicke. When Sir Robert Kerr's day of delivery came, hee failed too, and my Lord Hume, by the king's command, was to deliver him prisoner into Barwicke upon the like terms, which was performed. Sir Robert Kerr (contrary to all men's expectation) chose mee for his guardian, and home I brought him to my own house, after he was delivered to mee. I lodged him as well as I could, and tooke order for his diet, and men to attend on him, and sent him word that (although by his harsh carriage towards mee, ever since I had that charge, he could not expect any fa-

vour, yet) hearing so much goodness of him, that hee never broke his worde, if hee would give mee his hand and credit to be a true prisoner, hee would have no guard sett upon him, but have free liberty for his friends in Scotland to have ingress and regress to him as oft as hee pleased. Hee tooke this very kindly at my handes, accepted of my offer, and sent mee thankes.

"Some four dayes passed; all which time his friends came into him, and hee kept his chamber. Then hee sent to mee, and desired mee, I would come and speake with him, which I did; and after a long discourse, charging and re-charging one another with wrong and injuries, at last, before our parting, wee became good friends, with greate protestations, on his side, never to give mee occasion of unkindnesse again. After our reconciliation, hee kept his chamber no longer, but dined and supt with mee. I tooke him abroad with mee at the least thrice a-weeke, a hunting, and every day wee grew better friends. Bocleuch, in a few days after, had his pledges delivered, and was set at liberty. But Sir Robert Kerr could not get his, so that I was commanded to carry him to Yorke, and there to deliver him prisoner to the archbishop, which accordingly I did. At our parting, hee professed greate love unto mee for the kind usage I had shown him, and that I would find the effects of it upon his delivery, which hee hoped would be shortly.

"Thus wee parted; and, not long after, his pledges

were gott, and brought to Yorke, and hee sett at liberty. After his retourne home, I found him as good as his word. Wee met oft at dayes of truce, and I had as good justice as I could desire; and so wee continned very kinde and good friends, all the tyme that I stayed in that March, which was not long."

APPENDIX No. III.

MAITLAND'S COMPLAYNT,

AGAINST

THE THIEVIS OF LIDDISDAIL.

FROM PINKERTON'S EDITION, COLLATED WITH A MS. OF MAITLAND'S POEMS, IN THE LIBRARY OF EDINBURGH COLLEGE.

Of Liddisdail the common theifis[1]
Sa peartlie stellis[2] now and reifis,[3]
That nane may keip
Horse, nolt,[4] nor scheip,[5]
Nor yett dar sleip
For their mischeifis.

[1] Thieves.—[2] Steal.—[3] Rob.—[4] Black cattle; oxen.—[5] Sheep.

They plainly throw the country rydis.
I trow[1] the mekil devil thame gydis!
Quhair thay onset,
Ay in thair gait,[2]
Thair is na yet[3]
Nor dor thame bydis.[4]

Thay leif richt nocht, quhair ever thay ga;
Their can na thing be hid them fra;
For gif men wald
Thair housis hald,
Than wax they bald,
To burne and slay.

Thay theifis have neirhand[5] herreit[6] hail[7]
Ettricke forest and Lawderdail;
Now are they gane,
In Lawthiane;
And spairis nane
That thay will waill.[8]

Thay landis ar with stouth[9] sa socht,
To extreame povertye ar broucht,
Thay wicked scrowis[10]
Has laid the plowis,[11]

[1] I wot.—[2] Way.—[3] Gate.—[4] Hinders.—[5] Almost.—[6] Plundered.—[7] The whole.—[8] Make choice of.—[9] Theft.—[10] Larvæ (fig.)—[11] Ploughs.

That nane or few is
That are left oucht.

Bot[1] commoun taking of blak mail,
They that had flesche, and breid and aill,
Now are sae wrakit,
Made bair and nakit,
Fane to be slakit
With watter caill.[2]

Thay theifis that steillis and tursis[3] hame,
Ilk ane o' them has ane to-name;[4]
Will of the Lawis,
Hab of the Schawis:
To mak bar wawis[5]
Thay think nae schame.

Thay spuilye[6] puir men of their pakis,[7]
Thay leif them nocht on bed nor bakis:[8]
Baith hen and cok,
With reil and rok,[9]

[1] But; besides.—[2] Broth of vegetables.—[3] Pack up and carry off.—[4] Owing to the Marchmen being divided into large clans, bearing the same sirname, individuals were usually distinguished by some epithet derived from their place of residence, personal qualities, or descent. Thus every distinguished moss-trooper had what is here called, a *to-name*, or *nom de guerre*, in addition to his family name.—[5] Bare walls.—[6] Despoil.—[7] Pack, or wallet,—[8] Bread.—[9] Both the spinning instrument and the yarn.

The Lairdis Jok,
All with him takis.

They leif not spindell, spoone, nor speit ;[1]
Bed, bolster, blanket, sark,[2] nor scheit ;
Johne of the Parke
Ryps[3] kist and ark ;[4]
For all sic wark
He is richt meit.

He is weil kend, John of the Syde ;
A greater theif did never ryde.
He never tyris
For to brek byris ;[5]
Ouir muir and myris
Ouir guide ane gyde.

Thair is ane callet Clement's Hob,
Fra ilk puir wyfe reifis the wob,[6]
And all the lave,
Quhatever they haife,
The devil receaive
Thairfoir his gob.[7]

To sic grit stouth quha eir wald trow it,
Bot gif some great man it allowit ?

[1] Spit.—[2] Shirt.—[3] Searches.—[4] Both clothes and meal-chests.—[5] Cow-houses.—[6] Steals the web of cloth.—[7] Mouth.

Rycht sair I trew,
Thocht it be rew [1]
Thair is sa few
That dar avow it.

Of sum great men they have sic gait,
That redy are thame to debait,
And will up weir
Thair stolen geir,
That nane dare steir
Thame air [2] nor late.

Quhat causis theifis us ourgang,
But want of justice us amang?
Nane takis care,
Thocht all for fear;
Na man will spair
Now to do wrang.

Of stouth thocht now thay come gude speid,
That nother of men nor God has dreid,
Yet, or I dee,
Sum sall thame see,
Hing on a tree
Quhill thay be deid—

Quo' Sir R. M. *of* Lethington, *knicht.*

[1] Ruth—a pity.—[2] Early.

APPENDIX, No. IV.

BOND OF ALLIANCE,

OR

FEUD-STANCHING,

BETWIXT

THE CLANS OF SCOT AND KER

A. D. 1529.

The battle of Melrose (see Introduction, p. 114) occasioned a deadly feud betwixt the names of Scott and Ker. The following indenture was designed to reconcile their quarrel. But the alliance, if it ever took effect, was not of long duration; for the feud again broke out about 1553, when Sir Walter Scott was slain by the Kers in the streets of Edinburgh.

"Thir indentures, made at Ancrum the 16th of March, 1529 years, contains, purports, and bears leil and suithfast witnessing, That it is appointed, agreed, and finally accorded, betwixt honourable men, that is

to say, Walter Ker of Cessford, Andrew Ker of Fairnieherst, Mark Ker of Dolphinston, George Ker, tutor of Cessford, and Andrew Ker of Primesideloch, for themselves, kin, friends, mentenants, assisters, allies, adherents, and partakers, on the one part; and Walter Scot of Branxsholm, knight, Robert Scot of Allanhaugh, Robert Scot, tutor of Howpaisly, John Scot of Roberton, and Walter Scot of Stirkshaws, for themselves, their kin, friends, mentenants, servants, assisters, and adherents, on the other part; in manner, form, and effect, as after follows: For staunching all discord and variance betwixt them, and for furthbearing of the king's authority, and punishing trespasses, and for amending all slaughters, heritages, and steedings, and all other pleas concerning thereto, either of these parties to others, and for unitie, friendship, and concord, to be had in time coming, 'twixt them, of our sovereign lord's special command: that is to say, either of the said parties, be the tenor hereof, remits and forgives to others the rancour, hatred, and malice of their hearts; and the said Walter Scot of Branxholm shall gang, or cause gang, at the will of the party, to the four head pilgrimages of Scotland, and shall say a mass for the souls of umquhile Andrew Ker of Cessford, and them that were slain in his company, in the field of Melrose; and, upon his expense, shall cause a chaplain say a mass daily, when he is disposed,

[1] These pilgrimages were Scone, Dundee, Paisley, and Melrose.

in what place the said Walter Ker and his friends pleases, for the weil of the said souls, for the space of five years next to come.—Mark Ker of Dolphinston, Andrew Ker of Graden, shall gang at the will of the party, to the four head pilgrimages of Scotland, and shall gar say a mass for the souls of umquhile James Scot of Eskirk, and other Scots, their friends, slain in the field of Melrose; and, upon their expense, shall gar a chaplain say a mass daily, when he is disposed, for the heal of their souls, where the said Walter Scot and his friends pleases, for the space of three years next to come: and the said Walter Scot of Branxholm shall marry his son and heir upon one of the said Walter Ker his sisters; he paying therefor a competent portion to the said Walter Ker and his heir, at the sight of the friends of baith parties. And also, baith the saids parties bind and oblige them, be the faith and truth of their bodies, that they abide at the decreet and deliverance of the six men chosen arbiters, anent all other matters, quarrels, actiones, and debates, whilk either of them likes to propone against others betwixt the saids parties: and also the six arbiters are bound and obliged to decreet and deliver, and give forth their deliverance thereuntil, within the year and day after the date hereof.—And, attour, either of the saids parties bind and oblige them, by the faith and truth of their bodies, ilk ane to others, that they shall be leil and true to others, and neither of them will another's skaith, but they shall lett it at

their power, and give to others their best counsel, and it be asked; and shall take leil and aeffald part ilk ane with others, with their kin, friends, servants, allies, and partakers, in all and sundry their actions, quarrels, and debates, against all that live and die (may the allegiance of our sovereign lord the king allenarly be excepted.)—And for the obliging and keeping all thir premises above written, baith the saids parties are bound and obliged, ilk ane to others, be the faith and truth of their bodies, but fraud or guile, under the pain of perjury, men-swearing, defalcation, and breaking of the bond of deadly. And, in witness of the whilk, ilk ane to the procuratory of this indenture remain with the said Walter Scot and his friends, the said Walter Ker of Cessford has affixed his proper seal, with his subscription manual, and with the subscription of the said Andrew Ker of Fairnieherst, Mark Ker of Dolphinston, George Ker, tutor of Cessford, and Andrew Ker of Primesideloch, before these witnesses, Mr Andrew Drurie, Abbot of Melrose, and George Douglas of Boonjedward, John Riddel of that ilk, and William Stewart.

Sic Subscribitur,
WALTER KER of Cessford.
ANDREW KER of Fairnieherst.
MARK KER.
GEORGE KER.
ANDREW KER of Primesideloch."

APPENDIX, No. V.

ANE INTERLUDE
OF THE LAYING OF A GAIST.

This burlesque poem is preserved in the Bannatyne MSS. It is in the same strain with the verses concerning the *Gyre Carline.* (Vol. II.) As the mention of *Bettokis Bowr* occurs in both pieces, and as the scene of both is laid in East Lothian, they are perhaps composed by the same author. The humour of these fragments seems to have been directed against the superstitions of Rome; but it is now become very obscure. Nevertheless, the verses are worthy of preservation, for the sake of the ancient language and allusions.

Listen, lordis, I sall you tell,
Off ane very grit marvell,
Off Lord Fergussis gaist,[1]
How meikle Sir Andro it chest,[2]

[1] Ghost.—[2] Chased.

Unto Beittokis bour,
The silly sawle to succour:
And he hes writtin unto me,
Auld storeis for to se,
Gif it appinis[1] him to meit,
How he sall conjure the spreit:
And I haif red mony quars,[2]
Bath the Donet, and Dominus quc pars,
Ryme maid, and als redene[3]
Baith Inglis and Latene:
And ane story haif I to reid,
Passes Bontitatem in the creid.
To conjure the litill gaist he mon haif
Of tod's tails[4] ten thraif,[5]
And kast the grit holy water
With pater noster, pitter patter
And ye man sit in a compas,
And cry, Harbert tuthless,
Drag thow, and ye's draw,
And sit thair quhill cok craw.
The compas mon hallowit be
With aspergis me Domine:
The haly writ schawis als
Thair man be hung about your hals[6]
Pricket in ane woll poik[7]
Of neis powder[8] ane grit loik.[9]

[1] Happens.—[2] Quires—Books.—[3] Also read in.—[4] Foxes' tails—(there is an alpine herb so termed from its resemblance.)—[5] Thereof.—[6] Neck.—[7] Wool-pack.—[8] Nose-powder (snuff.)—[9] Great lots, or lot

Thir thingis mon ye beir
Brynt in ane doggis eir,[1]
Ane pluck, ane pindill, and ane palme cors,
Thre tuskis of ane awld hors,
And of ane yallow wob the warp,
The boddome of ane auld herp,
The heid of ane cuttit reill,
The band of an awld quheill,
The taill of ane yeild sow,
And ane bait of blew wow,[2]
Ane botene,[3] and ane brechame,[4]
And ane quhorle made of lame,[5]
To luke out at the litill boir,[6]
And cry, Crystis cross, you befoir:
And quhen you see the litill gaist,
Cumand to you in all haist,
Cry loud, Cryste eleisone,
And speir what law it levis on?[7]
And gif it sayis on Godis ley,
Than to the litill gaist ye say,
With braid benedicite;
—"Litill gaist, I conjure the,
With lierie and larie,[8]
Bayth fra God, and Sanct Marie,
First with ane fischis mouth,
And syne with ane sowis towth,

[1] Burnt in a dog's ear.—[2] Blue-wool.—[3] Button.—[4] Horse-collar.—[5] A whirl made of metal.—[6] Window.—[7] Believes in.—[8] With laying and with lore.

With ten pertane tais,[1]
And nyne knokis of windil strais,
With thre heids of curle doddy."[2]
And bid the gaist turn in a boddy.
Then efter this conjuratioun,
The litill gaist will fall in soun,
And thair efter down ly,
Cryand mercy peteously;
Than with your left heil sane,[3]
And it will nevir cum againe,
As meikle as a mige amaist.[4]

He had a litill we leg,
And it wes cant as any cleg,[5]
It wes wynd in ane wynden schet,
Baith the handis and the felt:
Suppose this gaist was littill,
Yit it stal Godis quhitell;[6]
It stal frae peteous Abrahame,
Ane quhorle and ane quhim quhame;[7]
It stal frae ye carle of ye mone
Ane payr of awld yin schone;[8]
It rane to Pencatelane,
And wirreit[9] ane awld chaplane.

[1] Ten crabs' claws.—[2] A small plant in marshes.—[3] *Sign*—make the sign of the cross.—[4] Apparently some lines are here omitted.—[5] Gad-fly.—[6] Knife.—[7] Whirl and whim-wham.—[8] One-soled shoes.—[9] Worried.

This litill gaist did na mair ill
But clok [1] lyk a corn mill;
And it wald play and hop,
About the heid ane stre strop; [2]
And it wald sing, and it wald dance
Oure fute, and Orliance. [3]

Quha conjurit the litill gaist say ye?
Nane but the litill Spenzie fle, [4]
That with hir wit and her ingyne,
Gart the gaist leif agane;
And sune mareit the gaist the fle,
And croun'd him King of Kandelie;
And they gat theme betwene
Orpheus King and Elpha Quene. [5]
To reid quha will this gentill geist,
Ye hard it not at Cockilby's feist. [6]

[1] Clacked.—[2] Twist a straw about its head.—[3] Overfoot and Orleans—two dancing steps.—[4] Spanish fly.—[5] This seems to allude to the old romance of *Orfeo and Heurodis*, from which the reader will find some extracts, Vol. II. The wife of *Orpheus* is here called *Elpha*, probably from her having been abstracted by the elves or fairies.—[6] Alluding to a strange unintelligible poem in the Bannatyne MSS., called *Cockelby's Sow*. [This has been printed lately by Mr David Laing, of Edinburgh, 1830.]

APPENDIX, No. VI.

SUPPLEMENTARY STANZAS TO COLLINS'S ODE ON THE SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS.

BY WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ. ADVOCATE.[1]

THE Editor embraces this opportunity of presenting the reader with the following stanzas, intended to commemorate some striking Scottish superstitions, omitted by Collins in his Ode upon that subject; and which, if the Editor can judge with impartiality of the production of a valued friend, will be found worthy of the sublime original. The reader must observe, that these verses form a continuation of the address, by Collins, to the author of *Douglas*, exhorting him to celebrate the traditions of Scotland. They were first published in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, for April, 1788.

[1] [This accomplished and most dear friend of Sir Walter Scott, became a Judge of the Court of Session, by the title of Lord Kinnedder, and died in August 1822.—ED.]

Thy muse may tell, how, when at evening's close,
To meet her love beneath the twilight shade,
O'er many a broom-clad brae and heathy glade,
In merry mood the village maiden goes;
There, on a streamlet's margin as she lies,
Chanting some carol till her swain appears,
With visage deadly pale, in pensive guise,
Beneath a wither'd fir his form he rears![1]
Shrieking and sad, she bends her eirie flight,
When, mid dire heaths, where flits the taper blue,
The whilst the moon sheds dim a sickly light,
The airy funeral meets her blasted view!
When, trembling, weak, she gains her cottage low,
Where magpies scatter notes of presage wide,
Some one shall tell, while tears in torrents flow,
That, just when twilight dimmed the green hill's side,
Far in his lonely shiel her hapless shepherd died.

Let these sad strains to lighter sounds give place!
Bid thy brisk viol warble measures gay!
For, see! recall'd by thy resistless lay,
Once more the Brownie shows his honest face.

1 The *wraith*, or spectral appearance, of a person shortly to die, is a firm article in the creed of Scottish superstition. Nor is it unknown in our sister kingdom. See the story of the beautiful Lady Diana Rich.—*Aubrey's Miscellanies*, p. 89.

Hail, from thy wanderings long, my much-loved sprite!
Thou friend, thou lover of the lowly, hail!
Tell, in what realms thou sport'st thy merry night,
Trail'st the long mop, or whirl'st the mimic flail.
Where dost thou deck the much disorder'd hall,
While the tired damsel in Elysium sleeps,
With early voice to drowsy workman call,
Or lull the dame, while Mirth his vigils keeps?
'Twas thus in Caledonia's domes, 'tis said,
Thou plied'st the kindly task in years of yore:
At last, in luckless hour, some erring maid
Spread in thy nightly cell of viands store:
Ne'er was thy form beheld among their mountains more.[1]

Then wake (for well thou canst) that wondrous lay,
How, while around the thoughtless matrons sleep,
Soft o'er the floor the treach'rous fairies creep,
And bear the smiling infant far away:
How starts the nurse, when, for her lovely child,
She sees at dawn a gaping idiot stare!
O snatch the innocent from demons vilde,
And save the parents fond from fell despair!
In a deep cave the trusty menials wait,
When from their hilly dens, at midnight's hour,
Forth rush the airy elves in mimic state,
And o'er the moonlight-heath with swiftness scour:

[1] See Introduction, *ante*.

In glittering arms the little horsemen shine;
Last on a milk-white steed, with targe of gold,
A fay of might appears, whose arms entwine
The lost, lamented child! the shepherds bold[1]
The unconscious infant tear from his unhallow'd hold.

[1] For an account of the Fairy superstition, see *Introduction to the Tale of Tamlane.*

APPENDIX, No. VII.

EXCOMMUNICATION OF BORDER ROBBERS.

BY RICHARD FOX,

BISHOP OF DURHAM, IN THE TIME OF HENRY VII.

This very curious document, (A.D. 1498,) which contains some particulars highly illustrative of the state of Border manners, was given to the Editor by his valued friend, Richard Surtees, Esq. of Mainsforth, in the bishopric of Durham, eminent for his knowledge of Border antiquities.

RICH. FOX, Bp. TEMP. H. J.

MONITIO CONTRA FAMOSOS LATRONES DE TYNDALL ET RYDSDALL.

Ricardus permissione divina Dúnelm. Episcopus dilectis Nobis Mag^ro^. Georg. Ogle, .A M. necnon universis et singulis ecclesiarum parochialium infra Tyndalle et Riddysdale nostræ dioces. constitut. Rectoribus et Vicariis, necnon Capellarum et Cantanarum inibi Capellanis, Curatis, et non Curatis, Salutem.

Quia tam fama quam notorietate facti referentibus ad aures nostras delatum est quod nonnulli Villas, Villulas, Hamelectas, et alia loca de Tyndale et Ryddisdalle inhabitantes, nec divina nec humana jura timentes, quibus se illaqueatos esse (quod summopere dolemus) intelligunt, aut saltem intelligere debent, de eisdem Villis Villulis Hamelectis ad in episcopatu villas, villulas, hamelectas, ad et in episcopatum Dunelm. et comitatum Northumbriæ, aliaq. loca dictis locis de Tyndalle et Ryddisdalle confinia et adjacentia, Latronum, Rapientium ac Deprædantium, more, per diuturna tempora sæpe, sæpius, et sæpissime, publice et manifeste, nocte dieq. incurrentes, prout adhuc indies, cotidie, sæpe, sæpius, et sæpissime, noctu dieq. publice et manifeste, sic incurrunt, furta, latrocinia, rapinas, et deprædationes passim committentes, pecora et catalla in eisdem inventa furati deprædatiq. fuerunt, et ab eisdem ad partes et territoria de Tyndall et Ryddisdalle prædict. aliaq. loca eisdem confinia, ad libitum suarum voluntatum asportaverunt, fugaverunt, et abigerunt, prout adhuc indies nulli equidem rei, quam, hujusmodi furtis, latrociniis, rapinis, et deprædationibus, dediti, furantur, deprædantur, fugant et abigunt: Et quod ipso delicto deterius est, per tabernas, et alia loca publica, iniquitatibus, furtis, latrociniis, et deprædationibus suis hujusmodi gloriantes se talia commisisse, et de cætero committere palam et publice jactari non desinant; hisq. malis non contenti, sed potius furtum furto, latrocinium latro-

cinio, rapinam rapinæ, deprædationem deprædationi, aliaq. mala malis accumulantes, in hujusmodi furtorum, latrociniorum, et deprædationum aggravationem, non solum ipsi furantur, verum etiam fures et latrones et raptores quoscunq. ad ipsos confugientes, receptant, nutriunt, hospitantur, confovent et confortant; suosq. liberos, servientes, atq. famulos in hujusmodi latrociniorum, furtorum, deprædationum, et rapinarum perpetratione, quod maxime detestandum est, educant, et exercitant, adeo ut furtum, latrocinium, depræ-dationem, rapinam, aut robberiam hujusmodi committere, aut eidem consentire, non solum non vereantur, sed crassam, immo verius quæsitam ignorantiam prætendentes, et dictas rapinas, furtum, et depræ-dationes, tanquam artem, unde victum suum quærant, publice et manifeste profitentes, crimen esse non agnoscunt: Suntq. nonnulli viri in partibus prædictis, quorum quidam sunt ministri justitiæ et regii justiciarii, qui eosdem fures, latrones, deprædatores, et raptores, aliosq. malefactores rectificare et justificare deberent, quidam vero sunt viri nobiles et potentes in confinibus et territoriis de Tyndalle et Ryddisdalle prædictis, aliisq. villis eisdem convicinis, circumvicinis, et adjacentibus degentes et commorantes, qui fures, latrones, raptores, deprædatores predictos ab hujusmodi criminibus prædictis refrænare et impedire possent, si suas ad id manus, ut deberent, porrigerent adjutrices: Quorum omnium, viz. justitiæ ministrorum, et aliorum, saltem nobilium et potentium, in partibus

et territoriis de Tyndalle et Ryddysdalle prædictis, aliisq. villis et locis eisdem convicinis et circumvicinis adjacentium, quidam conniventi oculo, quidam ex pacto et collusione, quidam vero propter lucrum, quod cum eis participant, nonnulli siquidem propter amorem, favorem, familiaritatem, affinitatem, et sanguinis conjunctionem, necnon nominis, indemnitatem hujusmodi furtis, latrociniis, rapinis, et deprædationibus, aliquando tacite, interdum etenim expresse, consentientes, fures ipsos, latrones, et deprædatores per eorum terras et districtus cum rebus, pecoribus, et catallis, quæ furati sunt, liberum habere transitum, scienter tolerant et permittunt; ac nonnunquam eosdem cum rebus, pecoribus, et catallis, raptis, deprædatis, et furto ablatis, receptarunt, prout adhuc recipiunt indies, et receptant non ignorantes receptatores hujusmodi quoscunq. non minori pœna dignos quam raptores, fures, latrones, et prædones: Nam si non esset qui foveret, reciperet, et confortaret, nullus rapinam, latrocinium, deprædationes hujusmodi committeret, committereve auderet: Eodemq. delicto singulas villas, villulas, hamelectas dictarum partium de Tyndall et Ryddisdall laborare intelleximus, quod maxime abhorrendum est; nam latrones, fures, raptores, deprædatores famosos et manifestos sic, ut præfertur, recipiunt, hospitantur, fovent, et nutriunt, ac inter eos et cum eisdem in partibus præsentibus, ut vicinos suos et familiares, habitare permittunt, et ad eadem facinora reiteranda invitant, et confortant publice, palam, et manifeste: Compluresq. capellanos,

sæpe nominatarum partium et territoriorum de Tyndalle et Ryddysdalle, publicos et manifestos concubinarios, irregulares, suspensos, excommunicatos, et interdictos, necnon literarum penitus ignaros, adeo ut per decennium celebrantes, nec ipsa quidem verba sacramentalia, uti quibusdam eorum opponentes experti sumus, legere sciant; nonnullos etiam non ordinatos, sed sacerdotii effigiem duntaxat prætendentes, non modo in locis sacris et dedicatis, verum etiam in prophanis et interdictis ac miserabiliter ruinosis; necnon vestimentis ruptis, laceratis, et fædissimis, nec divino, immo nec humano officio aut servitio dignis, quibus, deum contemnentes, induti Divina celebrare, Sacraq. et Sacramentalia ministrare intelleximus. Dicti præterea capellani supradictis furibus, latronibus, deprædatoribus, receptatoribus, et raptoribus manifestis et famosis, sacramenta et sacramentalia ministrant, sine debita restitutione aut animo restituendi, ut ex facti evidentia constat, sicq. eos sine cautione de restituendo, ecclesiasticæ sepulturæ, cum ex sacrorum canonum, et sanctorum patrum institutis, hæc facere districte prohibentur, passim committunt, in animarum suarum grave periculum, aliorumq. Christi fidelium exemplum perniciosum, plurimorumq. spoliatorum et privatorum bonis, rebus, pecoribus, et catallis suis hujusmodi, damnum non modicum et gravamen. Nos igitur animarum hujusmodi malefactorum saluti providere cupientes, spoliatorumq. et privatorum hujusmodi jacturis et dispendiis paternali affectu compatientes, et, quantum in nobis est, remedium in hac parte apponere, ut tene-

mur, volentes, vobis omnibus et singulis Rectoribus, Vicariis, Capellanis, Curatis, et non Curatis prædictis tenore præsentium, in virtute sanctæ obedientiæ firmiter injungendo mandamus, quatenus proximis diebus dominicis et festivis, inter missarum et aliorum divinorum solemnia in ecclesiis et capellis vestris, dum major in eisdem aderit populi multitudo, omnes et singulos fures, latrones, raptores, prædones, deprædatores, et eos præsertim quos famosos et manifestos latrones, raptores, et deprædatores fuisse et esse intelleximus, quorum nomina in præsenti rescripto sunt descripta, peremptorie moneatis, quos nos etiam tenore præsentium primo, secundo, et tertio, ac peremptorie monemus, ut ipsi, omnes et singuli, ab hujusmodi incursionibus, furtis, latrociniis, rapinis, deprædationibus de cætero se abstineant et desistant, sub pæna majoris excommunicationis sententiæ, quam ex sacrorum canonum institutis incurrunt, sicq. eos et eorum quemlibet incurrere volumus ipso facto.

Citetis insuper, seu citari faciatis peremptorie omnes et singulos famosos et manifestos fures, latrones, raptores, et deprædatores, quorum nomina sunt in dorso præsentis schedulæ sive rescripti descripta, et eorum quemlibet, quod compareant, sicq. quilibet eorum compareat, coram nobis, aut nostro in hac parte commissario, in Galilea[1] Ecclesiæ nostræ Cathedralis Dunelm.

[1] The *Galilee* was a side chapel to which excommunicated persons had liberty of repairing, while service was celebrated. The *Galilee* at Durham is now a school-room.

locoq. consistoriali ejusdem, sexto die post citationem eis et eorum cuilibet in hac parte factam, si juridicus fuerit, alioquin proximo die juridico extunc sequente, quo die nos aut commissarium nostrum hujusmodi ibidem ad jura reddend. hora consueta pro tribunali sedere contigerit, certis articulis et interrogatoriis, meram animarum suarum salutem et correctionem concernentibus, commissario eisdem et eorum cuilibet in eorum adventu ex officio nostro mero objiciendis personaliter responsuri et parituri. Moneatis insuper sic, ut præmittitur, peremptorie omnes et singulos ministros justitiæ, cæterosq. viros nobiles et potentes, dictas partes et territoria de Tyndall et Ryddysdall, et loca vicina et circumjacentia inhabitantes, necnon omnes et singulos Capellanos, Curatos, et non Curatos, in eisdem partibus et territoriis de Tyndall et Ryddysdall divina celebrantes, quatenus ipsi justitiæ ministri et viri nobiles et potentes omnes et singulos fures et latrones, necnon raptores et deprædatores, in et ad partes et territoria de Tyndall et Ryddysdall cum rebus, pecoribus, et catallis furtive oblatis, confugientes, necnon omnes et singulos fures, latrones, et deprædatores in eisdem partibus et territoriis de Tyndall et Ryddysdall commorantes et degentes, præsertim famosos, publicos, notorios, et manifestos nullatenus foveant, nutriant, aut confortent, hospitentur, aut manuteneant, immo eosdem fures, latrones, et deprædatores quoscunq. ab eisdem partibus et territoriis de Tyndall et Ryddysdall amoveant, sicq.

amoveri faciant et procurent, seu saltem eosdem fures, latrones, deprædatores, et raptores quoscunq. capiant, sicq. capi faciant eosdemq. rectificent et justificent.

Capellani vero, Curati, et non Curati, in eisdem partibus et territoriis divina celebrantes, hujusmodi fures, latrones, et deprædatores, saltem publicos, notorios, et manifestos, ad sacramenta pœnitentiæ, eucharistiæ, sepulturæ, cæteraq. sacramenta aut sacramentalia sine debita restitutione spoliatis facta, aut sufficienti cautione de restituendo præstita, nisi in mortis articulo, et tunc ad sacramenta pœnitentiæ et eucharistiæ duntaxat, non autem ad sepulturam, sub pœna suspensionis ab officio et beneficio, nullatenus admittant. * * * * *

TESTIMONIALIS LITERA DNI. EPISCOPI SUPER ABSOLUTIONE QUORUNDAM LATRONUM, ET INJUNCTIONES.

RICARDUS permissione divina Dunelm. Episcopus universis et singulis Rectoribus, Vicariis, Capellanis, Curatis, et non Curatis quibuscunq. curam animarum habentibus, infra territorium de Tyndall et Ryddysdall nostræ dioces. Salutem, gratiam, et benedictionem. Sciatis Sandy Charelton, Crysty Milborn, Howy Milborn, Atkin Milborn filium Willielmi Milborn, Laury Robeson, Davy Robeson, Sandy Robeson, Gilly Tod of ye Crake-aller of Smebemouth, George Tod, Rouly Tod, Tammy Tod, Sandy Tod of ye Shawe, George Mershell, Sandy Hunter, a sententia excommunica-

tionis, quam in eosdem, pro eorum contumacia, promulgavimus, pro nos absolutos esse, et communioni hominum ac sacris ecclesiæ restitutos, seq. nostræ correctioni humiliter submittentes, injunctiones salutaremve suscepisse pœnitentiam, videlicet ut de cætero rapinam, furtum, aut latrocinium publice, manifeste, vel occulte non committant, nec aliquis eorum committat, aut talia committenti auxilium, consilium, vel favorem præstent, nec aliquis eorum præstet, seu talia committentium consilium quovismodo celent seu celet, celarive procurent seu procuret. Item quod post diem Merc. proxime futurum, viz. 26 diem mensis Septembris jam instant. non incedant nec aliquis eor. incedat pedes aut eques inductus subicinio, Anglice, *a Jacke*, aut galea, Anglice, *a Salet or a Knapescall*, aut aliis armis defensivis quibusc. nec equitent aut eor. aliquis equitet super equo aut equa cujus valor, communi hominum æstimatione, excedet sex solidos et octo denarios, nisi contra Scotos vel alios regis inimicos. Injungimus præterea quod postquam ingressi fuerint vel eor. aliquis ingressus fuerit cœmiterium, ecclesiæ vel capellæ cujuscunque infra territorium de Tynedall et Riddisdall ad divina inibi audiend. vel orationes inibi faciend. seu alia quæcunq. faciend. abjiciant seu deponant, sicq. eor. quilibet abjiciat et deponat arma invasiva quæc. si quæ habeant, si ad longitudinem unius cubiti se extendant, et quamdiu fuerint seu aliquis eor. fuerit infra eand. eccl^iam. seu capell. aut cœmiter. ejusd. cum nullo ser-

monem aut verbum habeat, nisi cum Curato aut Sacerdote illius eccliæ vel capellæ, sub pæna excomm. majoris, quam in eos et eorum quemlibet casu quo his nostris injunctionibus aut uni eor. non paruerint, cum effectu exnunc prout extunc, et extunc prout exnunc, promulgamus, in scriptis justitia mediante vobis igitur, &c. Dat. in castro n^ro. de Norham sub s. n^ro. 25 die mens. Sept. A.D. 1498.

APPENDIX, No. VIII.

DOUBLE OF THE CONTRACT

BETWIXT THE

KING AND SEVERAL OF HIS SUBJECTS.

(A.D. 1162.)

[The original of this curious brief, by which the Borderers renounced their vocation of theft and robbery, is in the hands of the Editor, whose ancestor is one of the parties subscribing. Similar bonds were doubtless executed by the other clans; among whom copies would be distributed for their subscription. This appears to have referred chiefly to the clan of Scott.]

We noblemen, barons, landit gentilmen, and uthers, under subscryveing, deiply considering with ourselves the wrackfull and intollerable calamities soe long sustained be us, our frends, our servants, and inhabitants, upon proper lands and heretages, at the hands of theives and murtherers, within the Highlands and Bordours; whereby our bloods have been cruelly shed,

our goods be opin depredation violentlie reft and spulzied, and our most plentifull and profitable roumes, for fear of their incursions and oppressions, left desolat and desert, without tennent or inhabitant, to our inexcuseable reproach and shameful wrack, if wee sall any longer neglect to use sic lawfull and allowable remedies as God, our honor, and the memorable examples of our worthie predecessors, still extant in the records of ther days, craves at our hands, for the repressing of their insolence: And considering, therwithall, the royall and princelie disposition of our most gracious soverane lord, utterit everie way for the suppressing of this infamous byke[1] of lawless limmers, and quhat earnest and faithfull dutie our ranks and places craves of us, for the furtherance of his Majesties most honorable resolution at this tyme, for the extermination of sic a venime, whereby our oursights hithertill has bein na litle hinder to the good success of the great care and paynes tane alwayes be his highness and his secret counsell, to work the said effect: Thairfore, and for remeid of our bypast slouth that way, in the fear of God, and with his Majesties gracious approbation and allowance, we all and everie ane of us have solemnly avowit, sworne, and protestit, like as, be the tenor heirof we avow, swear, and protest, upon our consciences and honors, that, as we are in hearts trew and faithfull, and obedient subjects,

[1] Nest.

to the King's Majestie, our sovereign lord and his authoritie, and alwayes answerable to his hienes laws; so, in our hearts, we abhorre, dampne, and detest all treason, murther, fire-ryseing, reviseing of women, thift, resset of thift, fortifeieng or assisting with thieves, shedding of true mens blood, common and manifest oppression, resset of persons excommunicat, or at the horne,[1] for criminall causes, with the authors and committers thereof whatsumever; in further taken wherof, we bind and obleis us, our aires and successors of our lands and heretages, to our soverane lord and his successors, that, within ten dayes after our subscription to the present, we sall discharge, and be oppin proclamation at the Mercat-croces of heid-burrowes within the shrifdomes, quherin the theives and limmers dwell, as also be particular intimation to themselfs, give up all bands of friendship, kyndnes, oversight, maintenance, or assureance, if ony we have, with common theives and broken clans or branches, unanswereable to his hienes lawes; and sall, fra then furth, affauldlie[2] and truelie, joyne and concurre together, als weill in action as in heart, to the pursute, with fire and sword, of all and whatsumever within this realm, of whatsumever clane, qualitie, or surname, who being charged, be opin proclamacione, to compeir to answer to complaints, and to relieve ther masters at his majestie and true mens hands, are or sall for ther disobedience be de-

[1] Outlawed.—[2] Simply; sincerely.

nounced fugitives and outlawes, together with whatsoever ther partakers, supliers, and recepters, and all sic other, as frae the tyme they be denunced fugitives, sall furnish to them, ther wyfes or families, meat, drink, herbore, or other confort quhatsumever: As lykewayes we bind and obleis us, in maner foresaid, that if any persone, dwelling within our houses, upon our lands, within our tackes, steadings, roumes, portiounes, bailleries, or other office or jurisdiction quhatsumever, commits ony of the crymes before expreimit, or any uther punishable be lyfe or member, we, or any of us under quhom the said persone dwells, being required thereto be his majesties letters valyentnes, or charges, or be his highnes consell or justice, sall neither directlie, nor indirectlie, give any warning or advertisement to him, quherby he may eschew his taking; but trewlie and effauldlie sall apprehend, bring and present him to underly his tryell of the cryme quherof he is dilatit, upon fiftein dayes warneing, without shift or excuse quhatsumever, as we sall ansuer to his majestie upon our honours, and under the paynes contained in the generall bond and acts of Parliament quhatsumever; and sall be comptable to our soverane lord and his hienes thesaurer, for their escheats, in cace they be convict; and, in case the persone or persons sa delatit, becomes fugitives, wharby we cannot apprehend them to be presentit, we sall expell, put and hold them furth of our bounds, heretages, tacks, and steidings, roumes, bailliaries, and jurisdictions quhatsum-

ever, togither with ther wyfes, bairnes, and families, and sall take fra them their stocke and steiding, and put in uther persones to occupy the same; and if it sall happin the saids malefactors to resort or come again within our bounds, or be sufferit to remain therein, with our witting, twelff hours togithir, or to repair with our knowledge to oppin mercat unapprehendit, in that cace we grant and confes us to be culpable of quhatsumever crymes or skaithes committit be them at any time before or therefter: And if it shall happen at any tyme heirefter, ony creatures, rebells to our soverane lords authoritie, for criminall causes, to repair within our bounds, or any pairt of the shirriffdome quharein we dwell, we sall be readie to ryse and concurre, with our friends and forces, to ther pursute, till they be either apprehendit and presented to justice, or put out of the sheriffdome quharein we dwell; moreover, none of us herefter sall tryst or assure with any declared theeves or fugitives, but quhensoever any affray of theeves or reivers happens within our bounds or jurisdictions forsaids, we shall at the affray or forray, be ourselves, our servants, kin, freinds, and sae many partakers as we may get, ryse, follow, and pursue the saids theeves and reivers, at the outermost of our power, as we wold doe to the rescue of our owne proper goods in cace they were in the lyke danger, being alwayes warned thereto be the scout-baillie in the countrie, requisitione of partie, or otherwayes quhatsumever: And if it be found, that we ly still at siclike effrayes, and suffers the saids

theeves and rubbers to pass throw our boundis, without purseuing them and making uther thorture or impediment we may, in that cace we accept on us the guiltiness of quhatsumever theft or uther cryme that they commit, as perters with them therin and punisheable therefore, conforme to the act of parliament: And if it shall happin any stowth-reiff[1] or oppression to be committed at any tyme heirefter, upon any his hienes subjects, be any inhabitants within our boundis and jurisdictionis forsaids, the same being notified to us be the owners of the goods, or any uther follower therof in ther names, and the persone and place showin to us be quhom the gudes are stollen, and quhar they are resett within our boundis, we sall, immediatlie therefter, be ourselves, or be some speciall friend orservant, ayde and addresse us to the said place, and finding the goods ther, shall see them rendered to the follower, without gratitude or good deid, and therwith sall apprehend the theif, if he be present on the ground, or can be found within our bounds, then, or at any tyme therefter, and present him to his majestie, or to his justice, to be punished according to his merit; or, if we cannot find him, we shall intimate his name to the shriff, stewart, or wardane, to be denunced fugitives be them at the Mercat-croce of the next heidburgh, that he, his wyfe, and familie, therefter may be used in manner foresaid: Likewayes, that nane of us heirefter sall, aither opinlie

[1] Robbery.

or privalie, for any theif-hider, entertainer, or resetter of theft or theftous goods, assist nor defend them directlie nor indirectlie, solisit for their impunite, or bear grudge, rancoure, or quarrell againes any man for their dilatione, apprehension, or pursute in any sort, under the paine of infame and acceptance upon us of the guiltines of the said cryme, in cace they be convict: And if it sall happen us, or any of us, at ony tyme heirefter, to meit with ony notorious thief or lymmer, whom we may tak, we sall not faillie to apprehend, keip, and detaine him, in sure capptivitie and firmance, unfred, or set to libertie, upon quhatsomever band, promise, restitutione, or assurance he can giue us; but sall present him to his majestie, his counsell, or justice, to be punished for his offence, under the payne, likewayes, to be repute culpable of his theftuous deids, and punishable accordinglie: And finallie, that we ourselves and all sic persons quhatsumever, as dwells upon our lands and uthers forsaids, sall alwayes be answerable to our soverane lord and his authoritie, and sall compeir before his hienes and his counsell, quhensoever we shall happin to be charged for that effect, under the paines contained in the acts of caution found for observation of the generall bands: And gif for execution of any of the premisses, we, or any of us, be quarrelled be ony clan, brensche, or surname, to whom the theeves pertaines, we bind and oblcis us and our foresaids, affauldlie and truelie, to concurre and assist with others against the brensch, surname, or clann, that quarrells, as if it were our proper cause; and sall

esteem the feid, if any follow, equall to us all. In witnes quhareof, our soverane lord, in taken of his said approbation, and allowance of the premisses, and evere ane of us, for us and our forsaids, have subscryvit this present, to be insert and registrat in the books of the secret counsell, and to have the strength of ane decreit thereof against the contraveiners. Whernunto our subscriptions sall serue for ane sufficient warrant for everie ane of us.

This band, written by William Wyllie, clerk, *Sic subscribitur.* James R.—Lenox—Huntlie—Montross, Cancellarius—Angus—Herys—Caithness—Traquair — Lochinvar — Johnstoun — Drumlangric —David Scot of Stobneill. *Apud* Jedburgh, 29th March, 1612, Walter Scot of Goldielands, Walter Scot of Tishelaw, Robert Scot, his sone, James Gledstanes of Cocklaw, William Elliot of Falneish, Robert Scot of Satsheills, Walter Scot of Harden, Sym Scot of Bonniton, and William Scot in Burnfute, in the Water of Aill, with our hands at the pen, led be James Primerose, clerk of counsell, at our command. J. Primerose. Robert Scott in Stirkfield, with hand at the pen, led be William Wyly, wryter of this band. William Scot of Hartwoodmyres, Philip Scot of Dryhope, Robert Scot of Aikwood, William Scot of Howpasly. Jedburgh, 29th of October, 1612, William Scot of Whythaught, James Scot of Gilmerscleugh, and John Dalgleish of Douchar, with our hands at the pen, led be William Wylie, clerk. W. Wyllie.

MINSTRELSY

OF THE

SCOTTISH BORDER.

PART FIRST.

Historical Ballads.

SIR PATRICK SPENS.

ONE edition of the present ballad is well known; having appeared in the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, and having been inserted in almost every subsequent collection of Scottish songs. But it seems to have occurred to no editor, that a more complete copy of the song might be procured. That, with which the public is now presented, is taken from two MS. copies,[1] collated with several verses, recited by the editor's friend, Robert Hamilton, Esq., advocate[2]—being the 16th and the four which follow. But, even with the assistance of the common copy, the ballad seems still to be a fragment. The cause of Sir Patrick Spens's voyage is, however, pointed out distinctly;

[1] That the public might possess this curious fragment as entire as possible, the editor gave one of these copies, which seems the most perfect, to Mr Robert Jamieson, to be inserted in his collection. It also has been published, with many curious illustrations, in Mr John Finlay's Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads, Glasgow, 1808.

[2] [Robert Hamilton, Esq. Sheriff of Lanarkshire, and one of the Principal Clerks of Session, died in 1831.]

and it shows that the song has claims to high antiquity, as referring to a very remote period in Scottish history.

Alexander III. of Scotland died in 1285; and, for the misfortune of his country, as well as his own, he had been bereaved of all his children before his decease. The crown of Scotland descended upon his grand-daughter, Margaret, termed, by our historians, the *Maid of Norway*. She was the only offspring of a marriage betwixt Eric, King of Norway, and Margaret, daughter of Alexander III. The kingdom had been secured to her by the Parliament of Scotland held at Scone, the year preceding her grandfather's death. The regency of Scotland entered into a congress with the ministers of the King of Norway, and with those of England, for the establishment of good order in the kingdom of the infant Princess. Shortly afterwards, Edward I. conceived the idea of matching his eldest son, Edward, Prince of Wales, with the young Queen of Scotland. The plan was eagerly embraced by the Scottish nobles; for, at that time, there was little of the national animosity, which afterwards blazed betwixt the countries, and they patriotically looked forward to the important advantage of uniting the island of Britain into one kingdom. But Eric of Norway seems to have been unwilling to deliver up his daughter; and, while the negotiations were thus protracted, the death of the Maid of Norway effectually crushed a scheme, the consequences of which might have been, that the distinction betwixt England and Scotland

would, in our day, have been as obscure and uninteresting as that of the realms of the heptarchy.—HAILES' *Annals.* FORDUN, &c.

The unfortunate voyage of Sir Patrick Spens may really have taken place, for the purpose of bringing back the Maid of Norway to her own kingdom; a purpose which was probably defeated by the jealousy of the Norwegians, and the reluctance of King Eric. I find no traces of the disaster in Scottish history; but, when we consider the meagre materials whence Scottish history is drawn, this is no conclusive argument against the truth of the tradition. That a Scottish vessel sent upon such an embassy, might, as represented in the ballad, have been freighted with the noblest youth in the kingdom, is sufficiently probable; and, having been delayed in Norway till the tempestuous season was come on, its fate can be no matter of surprise. The commissioners recorded in *history*, as having been formally sent by the Scottish nation to receive their Queen, were Sir David Wemyss of Wemyss, and Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie; the same, whose knowledge, surpassing that of his age, procured him the reputation of a wizard. But, perhaps, the expedition of Sir Patrick Spens was previous to this solemn embassy. The introduction of the King into the ballad seems a deviation from history; unless we suppose, that Alexander was, before his death, desirous to see his grandchild and heir.[1]

[1] [Mr Buchan, in his "Ancient Ballads," 1828, inserts a

The Scottish monarchs were much addicted to "sit in Dunfermline town," previous to the accession of the Bruce dynasty. It was a favourite abode of Alexander himself, who was killed by a fall from his horse, in the vicinity, and was buried in the Abbey of Dunfermline.

There is a beautiful German translation of this ballad, as it appeared in the *Reliques*, in the Völk's-Lieder of Professor Herder—an elegant work, in which it is only to be regretted that the actual popular songs of the Germans form so trifling a proportion.

The tune of Mr Hamilton's copy of *Sir Patrick Spens* is different from that to which the words are commonly sung; being less plaintive, and having a bold nautical turn in the close.

copy of Sir Patrick Spens, which has three stanzas more than that adopted by Sir Walter Scott; and, among other variations, one in stanza 7th, which gets rid of this difficulty. See *post*, p. 300. Buchan said he had it from "a wight of Homer's craft," a wandering minstrel, who has been travelling in the North as a mendicant these 50 years.—Vol. I. p. 289.]

SIR PATRICK SPENS.

THE King sits in Dunfermline town,
Drinking the blude-red wine;
"O[1] whare will I get a skeely skipper,[2]
To sail this new ship of mine?"—

O up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the King's right knee,—
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
That ever sailed the sea."—

Our King has written a braid letter,
And seal'd it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

"To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem;

[1] In singing, the interjection O is added to the second and fourth lines

[2] *Skeely skipper*—Skilful mariner.

The King's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis thou maun bring her hame."

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Sae loud loud laughed he;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.

"O wha is this has done this deed,
And tauld the King o' me,
To send us out, at this time of the year,
To sail upon the sea?[1]

"Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem;
The King's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame."—[2]

[1] By a Scottish Act of Parliament, it was enacted, that no ship should be freighted out of the kingdom, with any staple goods, betwixt the feast of St Simon's day and Jude and Candlemas.—*James III. Parliament 2d, chap.* 15. Such was the terror entertained for navigating the North Seas in winter.

[2] [In Mr Buchan's copy we have—

"But I maun sail the seas the morn,
And likewise sae maun you,
To Norroway wi' our King's daughter—
A chosen Queen she's now."

According to this edition, then, Sir Patrick's errand was, not to bring the Maiden of Norway to Scotland, but to convey her mother, the daughter of Alexander III., to Norway.]

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn,
Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway,
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
In Noroway, but twae,
When that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say,—[1]

"Ye Scottishmen spend a' our King's goud,
And a' our Queenis fee."—
"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud!
Fu' loud I hear ye lie;

"For I brought as much white monie,
As gane[2] my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou[3] of gude red goud,
Out o'er the sea wi' me.

"Make ready, make ready, my merrymen a'!
Our gude ship sails the morn."—
"Now, ever alake, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

[1] [They hadna stayed into that place
A month but and a day,
Till he caused the *flip* in mugs gae roun',
And wine in cans sae gay.—BUCHAN.]

[2] *Gane*—Suffice.—[3] *Half-fou*—the eighth part of a peck.

"I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And, if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm."[1]

"They hadna sail'd a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the topmasts lap,[2]
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam o'er the broken ship,
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O where will I get a gude sailor,
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall top-mast,
To see if I can spy land?"—

"O here am I, a sailor gude,
To take the helm in hand,
Till you go up to the tall top-mast;
But I fear you'll ne'er spy land."—

[1] ["The bard, be sure, was weatherwise, who framed
The Grand Old Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens."
COLERIDGE'S *Sibylline Leaves.*]

[2] *Lap*—Sprang.

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane,
When a bout flew out of our goodly ship,[1]
And the salt sea it came in.[2]

"Gae, fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side,
And let nae the sea come in."—[3]

They fetch'd a web o' the silken cláith,[4]
Another o' the twine,
And they wapp'd them round that gude ship's side,
But still the sea cam in.

[1] I believe a modern seaman would say, a plank had started; which must have been a frequent incident during the infancy of ship-building. Mr Finlay, however, thinks it rather means that a bolt gave way.

[2] ["He hadna gane to his tapmast,
A step but barely three,
Ere thro' and thro' the bonny ship's side,
He saw the green haw-sea."—BUCHAN.]

[3] The remedy applied seems to be that mentioned in *Cook's Voyages*, when, upon some occasion, to stop a leak, which could not be got at in the inside, a quilted sail was brought under the vessel, which, being drawn into the leak by the suction, prevented the entry of more water. Chaucer says,

"There n'is na new guise that it na'as old."

[4] [The vulgarization of this passage in Buchan's copy, is amusing:—

"There are five-and-fifty feather beds
Well packet in aé room,
And ye'll get as muckle gude canvass
As wrap the ship a' roun," &c.]

O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heel'd shoon!
But lang or a' the play was play'd,
They wat their hats aboon.

And mony was the feather bed,
That flatter'd[1] on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son,
That never mair cam hame.

The ladyes wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake of their true loves;
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang, may the ladyes sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang, may the maidens sit,
With their goud kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves!
For them they'll see nae mair.

O forty miles off Aberdeen,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,

1 *Flattered*—Fluttered, or rather floated, on the foam.

And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.[1]

[1] This concluding verse differs in the three copies of the ballads which I have collated. The printed edition bears,

"Half ower, half ower, to Aberdour;"

And one of the MSS. reads,

"At the back of auld St Johnstoune Dykes."

But, in a voyage from Norway, a shipwreck on the north coast seems as probable as either in the Frith of Forth or Tay; and the ballad states the disaster to have taken place out of sight of land.

[Buchan's version has,

"It's even ower frae Aberdour."

Aberdour is a small seaport, about six miles from "Dunfermling Town."—Ed.]

AULD MAITLAND.

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED. [1802.]

This ballad, notwithstanding its present appearance, has a claim to very high antiquity. It has been preserved by tradition; and is, perhaps, the most authentic instance of a long and very old poem, exclusively thus preserved. It is only known to a few old people upon the sequestered banks of the Ettrick; and is published, as written down from the recitation of the mother of Mr James Hogg,[1] who sings, or rather chants it, with great animation. She learned the ballad from a blind man, who died at the advanced age of ninety, and is said to have been possessed of much traditionary knowledge. Although the language of this poem is much modernized, yet many words, which the reciters have retained without understanding them, still preserve traces of its antiquity. Such are the words *springals* (corruptedly pronounced *springwalls*), *sow-*

[1] This old woman is still alive, and at present resides at Craig of Douglas, in Selkirkshire. 1805.—The mother of the "Ettrick Shepherd" is now deceased. 1820.

ies, portcullize, and many other appropriate terms of war and chivalry, which could never have been introduced by a modern ballad-maker. The incidents are striking and well managed; and they are in strict conformity with the manners of the age in which they are placed. The editor has, therefore, been induced to illustrate them, at considerable length, by parallel passages from Froissart, and other historians of the period to which the events refer.

The date of the ballad cannot be ascertained with any degree of accuracy. Sir Richard Maitland, the hero of the poem, seems to have been in possession of his estate about 1250; so that, as he survived the commencement of the wars betwixt England and Scotland, in 1296, his prowess against the English, in defence of his castle of Lauder or Thirlestane, must have been exerted during his extreme old age. He seems to have been distinguished for devotion as well as valour; for A.D. 1249, Dominus Ricardus de Mautlant gave to the Abbey of Dryburgh, "*Terras suas de Haubentside, in territorio suo de Thirlestane, pro salute animæ suæ, et sponsæ suæ, antecessorum suorum et successorum suorum, in perpetuum.*"[1] He also gave to the

[1] There exists also an indenture, or bond, entered into by Patrick, Abbot of Kelsau, and his convent, referring to an engagement betwixt them and Sir Richard Maitland, and Sir William, his eldest son, concerning the lands of Hedderwicke and the pasturages of Thirlestane and Blythe. This Patrick was Abbot of Kelso betwixt 1258 and 1260.

same convent, "*Omnes terras, quas Walterus de Giling tenuit in feodo suo de Thirlestane et pastura incommuni de Thirlestane, ad quadraginta oves, sexaginta vaccas, et ad viginti equos.*"—Cartulary of Dryburgh Abbey, in the Advocates' Library.

From the following ballad, and from the family traditions referred to in the Maitland MSS., Auld Maitland appears to have had three sons; but we learn, from the latter authority, that only one survived him, who was thence surnamed *Burd alane*, which signifies either *unequalled*, or *solitary*. A *Consolation*, addressed to Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington, a poet and scholar who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century, and who gives name to the Maitland MSS., draws the following parallel betwixt his domestic misfortunes and those of the first Sir Richard, his great ancestor :—

" Sic destanie and derfe devoring deid
Oft his own hous in hazard put of auld;
Bot your forbeiris, frovard fortounes steid
And bitter blastes ay buir with breistis bauld;
Luit wanweirdis work and walter as they wald,
Thair hardie hairtis, hawtie and heroik,
For fortounes feid or force wald never fauld,
But stormis withstand with stomak stout and stoik.

" Renowned Richert of your race record,
Quhai prais and prowis cannot be exprest;
Mair lustie lynyage nevir haid anc lord,
For he begat the bauldest bairnis and best,
Maist manful men, and madinis most modest,
That ever wes syn Pyramus son of Troy,

But piteouslie thai peirles perles a pest
Bereft him all bot Buird-allane, a boy.

" Himselfe was aiget, his hous hang be a har,
Duill and distres almaist to deid him draife;
Yet Burd-allane, his only son and air,
As wretched, vyiss, and valient, as the laive,
His hous uphail'd, quhilk ye with honor haive.
So nature that the lyk invyand name,
In kindlie cair dois kindly courage craif,[1]
To follow him in fortoune and in fame.

" Richerd he wes, Richerd ye are also,
And Maitland als, and magnanime ar ye;
In als great age, als wrappit are in wo,
Sewin sons[2] ye haid might contravaill his thrie,
Bot Burd-allane ye haive behind as he:
The lord his linage so inlarge in lyne,
And mony hundreith nepotis grie and grie[3]
Sen Richert wes as hundreth yeiris are hyne."

An Consolator Ballad, to the Richt Honorabill Sir Richert Maitland of Lethingtoune.—Maitland MSS. in Library of Edinburgh University.

Sir William Mautlant, or Maitland, the eldest and

[1] *i. e.* Similar family distress demands the same family courage.

[2] *Sewin sons*—This must include sons-in-law; for the last Sir Richard, like his predecessor, had only three sons, namely, I. William, the famous secretary of Queen Mary; II. Sir John, who alone survived him, and is the *Burd-allane* of the Consolation; III. Thomas, a youth of great hopes, who died in Italy. But he had four daughters married to gentlemen of fortune.—PINKERTON'S *List of Scottish Poets*, p. 114.

[3] *Grie and grie*—In regular descent; from *gre*, French.

sole surviving son of Sir Richard, ratified and confirmed, to the monks of Dryburgh, "*Omnes terras quas Dominus Ricardus de Mautlant pater suus fecit dictis monachis in territorio suo de Thirlestane.*" Sir William is supposed to have died about 1315.—CRAWFORD'S *Peerage.*

Such were the heroes of the ballad. The castle of Thirlestane is situated upon the Leader, near the town of Lauder. Whether the present building, which was erected by Chancellor Maitland, and improved by the Duke of Lauderdale, occupies the site of the ancient castle, I do not know; but it still merits the epithet of a "*darksome house.*" I find no notice of the siege in history; but there is nothing improbable in supposing, that the castle, during the stormy period of the Baliol wars, may have held out against the English. The creation of a nephew of Edward I., for the pleasure of slaying him by the hand of young Maitland, is a poetical license;[1] and may induce us to place the date of the composition about the reign of David II., or of his successor, when the real exploits of Maitland, and his sons, were in some degree obscured, as well as magnified, by the lapse of time. The inveterate hatred against the English, founded upon the usurpation of Edward I., glows in every line of the ballad.

[1] Such liberties with the genealogy of monarchs were common to romancers. Henry the Minstrel makes Wallace slay more than one of King Edward's nephews; and Johnie Armstrong claims the merit of slaying a sister's son of Henry VIII.

Auld Maitland is placed, by Gawain Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, among the popular heroes of romance, in his allegorical Palice of Honour.

> "I saw Raf Coilyear with his thrawin brow,
> Crabit John the Reif, and auld Cowkilbeis Sow;
> And how the wran cam out of Ailesay,
> And Piers Plowman, that meid his workmen few:
> Gret Gowmacmorne, and Fin Mac Cowl, and how
> They suld be goddis in Ireland, as they say.
> *Thair saw I Maitland upon auld beird gray,*
> Robin Hude, and Gilbert with the quhite hand,
> How Hay of Nauchton flew in Madin land."[1]

In this curious verse, the most noted romances, or popular histories of the poet's day, seem to be noticed.

[1] It is impossible to pass over this curious list of Scottish romances without a note; to do any justice to the subject would require an essay.—*Raf Coilyear* is said to have been printed by Lekprevick, in 1572; and of late recovered, has been reprinted by Mr David Laing of Edinburgh. Though it is now known only in its Scotch dress, this piece appears to have been originally French. . . . . *John the Reif*, as well as the former personage, is mentioned by Dunbar, in one of his poems, where he styles mean persons,

> "Kyne of Ranf Colyard, and Johne the Reif."

They seem to have been both robbers; Lord Hailes conjectured John the Reif to be the same with Johnnie Armstrong; but, surely, not with his usual accuracy; for the *Palice of Honour* was printed twenty-eight years before Johnnie's execution. John the Reif is mentioned by Lindesay, in his tragedy of *Cardinal Beaton:*

> —"disagysit, like John the Raif, he gied."

Cowkilbeis Sow is a strange legend in the Bannatyne MSS.—See *Complaynt of Scotland*, p. 131. . . . . *How the wren came out*

The preceding stanza describes the sports of the field: and that which follows refers to the tricks of *jugailrie;* so that the three verses comprehend the whole pastimes of the middle ages, which are aptly represented as the furniture of Dame Venus's chamber. The verse, referring to Maitland, is obviously corrupted; the true reading was probably, "*with his* auld beird gray." Indeed, the whole verse is full of errors and corruptions; which is the greater pity, as it conveys information to be found nowhere else.

The descendant of Auld Maitland, Sir Richard of

of Ailsay.—The wren, I know not why, is often celebrated in Scottish song. The testament of the wren is still sung by the children, beginning,

"The wren she lies in care's nest,
Wi' meikle dole and pyne."

This may be a modification of the ballad in the text. . . . . *Piers Plowman* is well known. Under the uncouth names of Gow Mac Morn, and of Fyn Mac Cowl, the admirers of Ossian are to recognise Gaul, the son of Morni, and Fingal himself; *heu, quantum mutatus ab illo!* . . . . To illustrate the familiar character of *Robin Hood*, would be an insult to my readers. But they may be less acquainted with *Gilbert with the White Hand*, one of his brave followers. He is mentioned in the oldest legend of that outlaw; Ritson's *Robin Hood*, p. 52:

"Thryes Robin shot about,
And alway he slist the wand,
And so dyde good *Gylberte*
With the White Hand."

Hay of Nachton I take to be the knight, mentioned by Wyntown, whose feats of war and travel may have become the subject

Lethington, seems to have been frequently complimented on the popular renown of his great ancestor. We have already seen one instance; and in an elegant copyof verses in the Maitland MSS., in praise of Sir Richard's seat of Lethington, which he had built, or greatly improved, this obvious topic of flattery does not escape the poet. From the terms of his panegyric we learn, that the exploits of auld Sir Richard with the gray beard, and of his three sons, were "sung in many a far countrie, albeit in rural rhyme;" from which we may infer, that they were narrated rather in the shape of a popular ballad, than in a *romance of price.* If this be the case, the song now published may have undergone little variation since the date of the Maitland MSS.; for, divesting the poem, in praise of Lethington, of its antique spelling, it would run as smoothly, and appear as modern, as any verse in

of a romance or ballad. He fought in Flanders, under Alexander, Earl of Mar, in 1408, and is thus described:—

"Lord of the Nachtane, Schire William,
Ane hanest knycht, and of gud fame,
A travalit knycht lang before than."

And again, before an engagement,

"The Lord of Nachtane, Schire William,
The Hay, a knycht than of gud fame,
Mad Schire Gilbert, the Hay, knycht."

Cronykil, B. IX. c. 27.

I apprehend we should read, "How Hay of Nachton *slew* in Madin Land." Perhaps Madin is a corruption for Maylin Land, or Milan.

the following ballad. The lines alluded to are addressed to the castle of Lethington:—

"And happie art thou sic a place,
That few thy maik[1] are sene!
But yit mair happie far that race
To quhome thou dois pertene.
Quha dois not knaw the Maitland bluid,
The best in all this land?
In quhilk sumtyme the honour stuid
And worship of Scotland.

"Of auld Sir Richard, of that name,
We have hard sing and say;
Of his triumphant nobill fame,
And of his auld baird gray,
And of his nobill sonnis three,
Quhilk that tyme had no maik;
Quhilk maid Scotland renounit be,
And all England to quaik.

"Quhais luifing praysis, made trewlie,
Efter that simple tyme,
Ar sung in monie far countrie,
Albeit in rural rhyme.
And, gif I dar the treuth declair,
And nane me fleitschour[2] call,
I can to him find na compair,
And till his barnis all."

It is a curious circumstance, that this interesting tale, so often referred to by ancient authors, should be now recovered in so perfect a state; and many readers may be pleased to see the following sensible observations, made by a person born in Ettrick Forest, in the humble situation of a shepherd:—"I am surprised to hear that

[1] Equal.—[2] Flatterer.

this song is suspected by some to be a modern forgery; the contrary will be best proved, by most of the old people, hereabouts, having a great part of it by heart. Many, indeed, are not aware of the manners of this country: till this present age, the poor illiterate people, in these glens, knew of no other entertainment, in the long winter nights, than repeating, and listening to, the feats of their ancestors, recorded in songs, which I believe to be handed down, from father to son, for many generations, although, no doubt, had a copy been taken, at the end of every fifty years, there must have been some difference, occasioned by the gradual change of language. I believe it is thus that many very ancient songs have been gradually modernized, to the common ear; while, to the connoisseur, they present marks of their genuine antiquity."—*Letter to the Editor, from* Mr James Hogg. [June 30, 1801.] To the observations of my ingenious correspondent I have nothing to add, but that, in this, and a thousand other instances, they accurately coincide with my personal knowledge.

AULD MAITLAND.

THERE lived a king in southern land,
King Edward hight his name;
Unwordily he wore the crown,
Till fifty years were gane.

He had a sister's son o's ain,
Was large of blood and bane;
And afterward, when he came up,
Young Edward hight his name.[1]

One day he came before the king,
And kneel'd low on his knee—
"A boon, a boon, my good uncle,
I crave to ask of thee!

"At our lang wars, in fair Scotland,
I fain hae wish'd to be;

[1] Were it possible to find an authority for calling this personage *Edmund*, we should be a step nearer history; for a brother, though not a nephew of Edward I., so named, died in Gascony, during an unsuccessful campaign against the French.—KNIGHTON, Lib. III. cap. 8.

If fifteen hundred waled[1] wight men
You'll grant to ride wi' me."—

"Thou sall hae thae, thou sall hae mae;
I say it sickerlie;
And I mysell, an auld gray man,
Array'd your host sall see."—

King Edward rade, King Edward ran—
I wish him dool and pyne![2]
Till he had fifteen hundred men
Assembled on the Tyne.

And thrice as many at Berwicke[3]
Were all for battle bound,
[*Who, marching forth with false Dunbar,*
A ready welcome found.[4]]

They lighted on the banks of Tweed,
And blew their coals sae het,

[1] *Waled*—Chosen.

[2] Thus Spenser, in *Mother Huberd's tale*—

Thus is the ape become a shepherd swain,
And the false fox his dog, God give them pain!

[3] North-Berwick, according to some reciters.

[4] These two lines have been inserted by Mr Hogg, to complete the verse. Dunbar, the fortress of Patrick, Earl of March, was too often opened to the English, by the treachery of that Baron, during the reign of Edward I.

And fired the Merse and Teviotdale,
All in an evening late.

As they fared up o'er Lammermore,
They burn'd baith up and down,
Until they came to a darksome house,
Some call it Leader-Town.

"Wha hauds this house?" young Edward cry'd,
"Or wha gies't ower to me?"—
A gray-hair'd knight set up his head,
And crackit richt crously:

"Of Scotland's king I haud my house;
He pays me meat and fee;
And I will keep my guid auld house,
While my house will keep me."—

They laid their sowies to the wall,[1]
Wi' mony a heavy peal;
But he threw ower to them agen
Baith pitch and tar barrel.

With springalds, stanes, and gads of airn,
Amang them fast he threw;
Till mony of the Englishmen
About the wall he slew.

[1] See Note A, at the end of the Ballad.

Full fifteen days that braid host lay,
Sieging Auld Maitland keen;
Syne they hae left him, hail and feir,
Within his strength of stane.

Then fifteen barks, all gaily good,
Met them upon a day,
Which they did lade with as much spoil
As they could bear away.

"England's our ain by heritage;
And what can us withstand,
Now we hae conquer'd fair Scotland,
With buckler, bow, and brand?"—

Then they are on to the land o' France,
Where auld King Edward lay,
Burning baith castle, tower, and town,
That he met in his way.

Until he came unto that town,
Which some call Billop-Grace;[1]
There were Auld Maitland's sons, a' three,
Learning at school, alas!

[1] If this be a Flemish or Scottish corruption for Ville de Grace, in Normandy, that town was never besieged by Edward I., whose wars in France were confined to the province of Gascony. The rapid change of scene, from Scotland to France, excites a suspicion, that some verses may have been lost in this place. The retreat of

The eldest to the youngest said,
"O see ye what I see?
Gin a' be trew yon standard says,[1]
We're fatherless a' three.

"For Scotland's conquer'd up and down;
Landmen we'll never be:
Now, will you go, my brethren two,
And try some jeopardy?"—[2]

Then they hae saddled twa black horse,
Twa black horse and a gray;
And they are on to King Edward's host,
Before the dawn of day.

the English host, however, may remind us of a passage in Wyntown, when, after mentioning that the Earl of Salisbury raised the siege of Dunbar, to join King Edward in France, he observes,

It was to Scotland a gud chance,
That thai made thaim to werray in France,
For had thai halyly thaim tane
For to werray in Scotland alane,
Efter the gret mischeffis twa,
Duplyn and Hallydowne war tha,
Thai suld have skaithit it too gretly.
Bot fourtowne, thoucht scho fald fekilly,
Will noucht at anis myscheffis fail;
Tharefore scho set thare hartis all,
To werray Fraunce richit to be,
That Scottis live in grettar lé.

Cronykl. B. VIII. cap. 34.

[1] Edward had quartered the arms of Scotland with his own.
[2] See Note B, at the end of this Ballad.

When they arrived before the host,
They hover'd on the lay—
"Wilt thou lend me our king's standard,
To bear a little way?"—[1]

"Where wast thou bred? where wast thou born?
Where, or in what countrie?"—
"In north of England I was born:"
(It needed him to lie.)[2]

"A knight me gat, a lady bore,
I am a squire of high renowne
I well may bear't to any king,
That ever yet wore crowne."—

"He ne'er came of an Englishman,
Had sic an ee or bree;[3]
But thou art the likest Auld Maitland,
That ever I did see.

"But sic a gloom on ae browhead,
Grant I ne'er see again!
For mony of our men he slew,
And mony put to pain."—

When Maitland heard his father's name,
An angry man was he!

[1] See Note C., at p. 338, *post*.—[2] See Note D., at p. 339, *post*.—[3] Eye or brow.

Then, lifting up a gilt dagger,
Hung low down by his knee,

He stabb'd the knight the standard bore,
He stabb'd him cruellie;
Then caught the standard by the neuk,
And fast away rode he.

" Now, is't na time, brothers," he c
" Now, is't na time to flee?"—
" Ay, by my sooth!" they baith re
" We'll bear you company."—

The youngest turn'd him in a path,
And drew a burnish'd brand,
And fifteen of the foremost slew,
Till back the lave[2] did stand.

He spurr'd the gray into the path,
Till baith his sides they bled—
" Gray! thou maun carry me away,
Or my life lies in wad!"—[3]

[1] Thus, Sir Walter Mauny, retreating into the fortress of Hanyboute, after a successful sally, was pursued by the besiegers, who "ranne after them lyke mædde men; than Sir Gualtier saide, Let me never be beloved wyth my lady, wythout I have a course wyth one of these followers!" and turning, with his lance in the rest, he overthrew several of his pursuers, before he condescended to continue his retreat.—FROISSART.

[2] The rest.—[3] In pledge.

The captain lookit ower the wa',
About the break o' day;
There he beheld the three Scots lads,
Pursued along the way.

"Pull up portcullize! down draw-brigg!
My nephews are at hand;
And they sall lodge wi' me to-night,
In spite of all England."—

Whene'er they came within the yate,
They thrust their horse them frae,[1]
And took three lang spears in their hands,
Saying, "Here sall come nae mae!"

And they shot out, and they shot in,
Till it was fairly day;
When mony of the Englishmen
About the draw-brigg lay.

Then they hae yoked carts and wains,
To ca' their dead away,
And shot auld dykes abune the lave,
In gutters where they lay.

[1] "The Lord of Hangest (pursued by the English) came so to the barryrs (of Vandonne) that were open, as his happe was, and so entred in therat, and than toke his speare, and turned him to defence, right valiantly."—FROISSART, vol. i. chap. 367.

The king, at his pavilion door,
Was heard aloud to say,
" Last night, three o' the lads o' France
My standard stole away.

" Wi' a fause tale, disguised, they came,
And wi' a fauser trayne;
And to regain my gaye standard,
These men were a' down slayne."

" It ill befits," the youngest said,
" A crowned king to lie;
But, or that I taste meat and drink,
Reproved sall he be."

He went before King Edward straight,
And kneel'd low on his knee;
" I wad hae leave, my lord," he said,
" To speak a word wi' thee."—

The king he turn'd him round about,
And wistna what to say—
Quo' he, " Man, thou's hae leave to speak,
Though thou should speak a' day."—

" Ye said, that three young lads o' France
Your standard stole away,
Wi' a fause tale, and fauser trayne,
And mony men did slay;—

" But we are nane the lads o' France,
Nor e'er pretend to be;
We are three lads o' fair Scotland,
Auld Maitland's sons are we;

" Nor is there men, in a' your host,
Daur fight us three to three."—
" Now, by my sooth," young Edward said,
" Weel fitted ye sall be!

" Piercy sall with the eldest fight,
And Ethert Lunn wi' thee:
William of Lancaster the third,
And bring your fourth to me!"

[" *Remember, Piercy, aft the Scot*
Has cower'd beneath thy hand:[1]]
For every drap of Maitland blood,
I'll gie a rig of land."—

He clanked Piercy ower the head,
A deep wound and a sair,
Till the best blood o' his bodie
Came rinning down his hair.

" Now, I've slayne ane; slay ye the twa;
And that's gude companye;

[1] Modern, [by James Hogg,] to supply an imperfect stanza.

And if the twa suld slay ye baith,
Ye'se get na help frae me." [1]

But Ethert Lunn, a baited bear,
Had many battles seen;
He set the youngest wonder sair,
Till the eldest he grew keen —

"I am nae king, nor nae sic thing: [2]
My word it shanna stand!
For Ethert sall a buffet bide,
Come he beneath my brand."

[1] According to the laws of chivalry, laws which were long time observed in duels, when two or more persons engaged on each side, he, who first conquered his immediate antagonist, was at liberty, if he pleased, to come to the assistance of his companions. The play of the *Little French Lawyer* turns entirely upon this circumstance; and it may be remarked throughout the poems of Boiardo and Ariosto, particularly in the combat of three Christian and three Pagan champions, in the 42d canto of *Orlando Furioso*. But doubtless a gallant knight was often unwilling, like young Maitland, to avail himself of this advantage. Something of this kind seems to have happened in the celebrated combat, fought in the presence of James II. at Stirling, in 1449, between three French, or Flemish warriors, and three noble Scottishmen, two of whom were of the house of Douglas. The reader will find a literal translation of Oliver de la Marche's account of this celebrated tourney, in PINKERTON'S *History*, vol. i. p. 428.

[2] Maitland's apology for retracting his promise to stand neuter, is as curious as his doing so is natural. The unfortunate John of France was wont to say, that if truth and faith were banished from all the rest of the universe, they should still reside in the breast and the mouth of kings.

He clankit Ethert ower the head,
A deep wound and a sair,
Till the best blood of his bodie
Came rinning ower his hair.

"Now I've slayne twa; slaye ye the ane;
Isna that gude companye?
And tho' the ane suld slaye ye baith,
Ye'se get nae help o' me."

The twa-some they hae slayne the ane;
They maul'd him cruellie;[1]
Then hung them over the draw-brigg,
That all the host might see.

They rade their horse, they ran their horse,
Then hover'd on the lee:[2]
"We be three lads o' fair Scotland,
That fain would fighting see."

This boasting when young Edward heard,
An angry man was he!
"I'll tak yon lad, I'll bind yon lad,
And bring him bound to thee!"—

[1] This has a vulgar sound, but is actually a phrase of romance. *T'ant frappant et* maillent *lex deux vaisaux l'un sur l'autre, que leurs heaumes, et leurs hauberts, sont tous cassez et rompuz.*—La fleur des Battailes.

[2] See Note E., at page 341, *pc*

'Now God forbid," King Edward said,
"That ever thou suld try!
Three worthy leaders we hae lost,
And thou the fourth wad lie.

"If thou shouldst hang on yon draw-brigg,
Blythe wad I never be!",
But, wi' the poll-axe in his hand,
Upon the brigg sprang he.[1]

The first stroke that young Edward ga
He struck wi' might and mayn;
He clove the Maitland's helmet stout,
And bit right nigh the brayn.

When Maitland saw his ain blood fa',
An angry man was he![2]
He let his weapon frae him fa',
And at his throat did flee.

And thrice about he did him swing,
Till on the grund he light,

[1] See page 343, *post*—Note F.

[2] There is a saying, that a Scottishman fights best after seeing his own blood. Camerarius has contrived to hitch this foolish proverb into a national compliment; for he quotes it as an instance of the persevering gallantry of his countrymen. "*Si in pugna proprium effundi sanguinem vidissent, non statim prostrato animo, concedebant, sed irato potius in hostes, velut furentes omnibus viribus incurrebant.*"

Where he has halden young Edward,
Tho' he was great in might.

"Now let him up," King Edward cried,
"And let him come to me!
And for the deed that thou hast done,
Thou shalt hae erldomes three!"—

"It's ne'er be said in France, nor e'er
In Scotland, when I'm hame,
That Edward once lay under me,[1]
And e'er gat up again!"

[1] Some reciters repeat it thus:—

"That *Englishman* lay under me,"

which is in the true spirit of Blind Harry, who makes Wallace say,

"I better like to see the Southeron die,
Than gold or land, that they can gie to me."

In slaying Edward, Maitland acts pitilessly, but not contrary to the laws of arms, which did not enjoin a knight to show mercy to his antagonist, until he yielded him, "*rescue or no rescue.*" Thus, the Seigneur de Languerant came before the walls of an English garrison, in Gascony, and defied any of the defenders to run a course with a spear; his challenge being accepted by Bertrand Courant, the governor of the place, they couched their spears, like good knights, and dashed on their horses. Their spears were broke to pieces, and Languerant was overthrown, and lost his helmet among the horses' feet. His attendants were coming up; but Bertrand drew his dagger, and said, "Sir, yield ye my prisoner, rescue or no rescue; els, ye are but dead." The dismounted champion spoke not a word; on which Bertrand, in fervent ire, dashed his dagger into his skull. Besides, the battle was not always finished by one warrior obtaining this advantage over the

He pierced him through and through the heart,
He maul'd him cruellie;
Then hung him ower the draw-brigg,
Beside the other three.

"Now take frae me that feather-bed,
Make me a bed o' strae!
I wish I hadna lived this day,
To mak my heart sae wae.

"If I were ance at London Tower,
Where I was wont to be,
I never mair suld gang frae hame,
Till borne on a bier-tree."

other.—In the battle of Nejara, the famous Sir John Chandos was overthrown, and held down, by a gigantic Spanish cavalier, named Martino Fernandez. "Then Sir John Chandos," says Froissart, "remembred of a knife that he had in his bosome, and drew it out, and struck this Martyne so in the backe, and in the sydes, that he wounded him to dethe, as he laye upon hym." The dagger, which the knights employed in these close and desperate struggles, was called the *Poniard of Mercy*.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

They laid their sowies to the wall,
Wi' mony a heavy peal.—P. 318, v. 5.

IN this and the following verse, the attack and defence of a fortress, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, are described accurately and concisely. The sow was a military engine, resembling the Roman *testudo*. It was framed of wood, covered with hides, and mounted on wheels, so that, being rolled forward to the foot of the besieged wall, it served as a shed, or cover, to defend the miners, or those who wrought the battering-ram, from the stones and arrows of the garrison. In the course of the famous defence, made by Black Agnes, Countess of March, of her husband's Castle of Dunbar, Montague, Earl of Salisbury, who commanded the besiegers, caused one of these engines to be wheeled up to the wall. The Countess, who, with her damsels, kept her station on the battlements, and affected to wipe off with her handkerchief the dust raised by the stones hurled from the English machines, awaited the approach of this new engine of assault, "Beware, Montague," she exclaimed, while the fragment of a rock was discharged from the wall—"Beware Montague! for farrow shall thy sow!"[1] Their cover being dashed to pieces, the assailants, with

1 This sort of bravado seems to have been fashionable in those times: "Et avec drapeaux, et leurs chaperons, ils torcholent les murs a l'endroit, ou les pierres venoient frapper."—*Notice des Manuscrits de la Bibliotheque Nationale.*

great loss and difficulty, scrambled back to their trenches. "By the regard of suche a lady," would Froissart have said, "and by her comforting, a man ought to be worth two men, at need." The sow was called by the French, *Truie*.—See HAILES' *Annals*, vol. ii. p. 89; WYNTOWN'S *Cronykil*, book viii.; WILLIAM of MALMESBURY, lib. iv.

The memory of the *sow* is preserved in Scotland by two trifling circumstances. The name given to an oblong hay-stack, is a *hay-sow*; and this may give us a good idea of the form of the machine. Children also play at a game with cherry-stones, placing a small heap on the ground, which they term a *sowie*, endeavouring to hit it, by throwing single cherry-stones, as the sow was formerly battered from the walls of the besieged fortress. My companions at the High School of Edinburgh, will remember what was meant by *herrying a sowie*. It is strange to find traces of military antiquities in the occupation of the husbandman and the sports of children.

The pitch and tar-barrels of Maitland were intended to consume the formidable machines of the English. Thus, at a fabulous siege of York, by Sir William Wallace, the same mode of defence is adopted:

> "The Englishmen, that cruel were and kene,
> Keeped their town, and fended there full fast;
> Faggots of fire among the host they cast,
> Up *pitch and tar* on fell *sowes* they lent;
> Many were hurt ere they from the walls went;
> *Stones on Springalds they did cast out so fast,*
> *And goads of iron made many grone agast.*"
>
> HENRY *the* MINSTREL'S *History of Wallace*—B. 8, & 5.

A more authentic illustration may be derived from Barbour's Account of the Siege of Berwick, by Edward II., in 1319, when a *sow* was brought on to the attack by the English, and burned by the combustibles hurled down upon it, through the device of John Crabb, a Flemish engineer, in the Scottish service

> "And thai, that at the sege lay,
> Or it was passyt the fyft day,
> Had made thaim syndry apparall,
> To gang eft sonys till assaill.

Off gret gests a *sow* thai maid,
That stalwart heildyne aboyne it haid;
With armyt men inew tharin,
And instruments for to myne.
Sindry scaffalds thai maid withall,
That war wele heyar than the wall,
And ordanyt als that, be the se,
The town suld weill assaillyt be.

"Thai within, that saw thaim swa,
Swa gret apparaill schap to ma,
Throw Craby's cunsaill, that wes sley,
A crane thai haiff gert dress up hey,
Rynnand on quheills, that thai micht bryr
It quhar that nede war off helping.
And pyk, and ter, als haiff thai tane;
And lynt, and herds, and brymstane;
And dry treyis that wele wald brin,
And mellyt aythir-other in:
And gret fagalds thairoff thai maid,
Gyrdit with irne bands braid.
The fagalds weill mycht mesaryt be,
Till a gret towrys quantito.
The fagalds brynnig in a ball,
With thair cran thoucht till awail;
And giff the sow come to the wall,
To lat it brynand on her fall;
And with stark chenyeis haid it thar.
Quhill all war brynt up that thar war
— — — — — — — —
Upon sic maner gan thai fycht,
Quhill it wes ner non off the day,
That thai without, on gret aray,
Pryssyt thair *sow* towart the wall;
And thai within sone gert call
The engynour, that takyn was,
And great menance till him mais,
And swour that he suld dey, bot he
Prowyt on the sow sic suteité
That he to fruschyt ilk dele,
And he, that hath persawyt wele
That the dede wes wele ner hym till,
Bot giff he mycht fulfil thair will,

Thoucht that he at hys mycht wald do.
Bendyt in gret hy then wes scho,
That till the sow wes ewyn set
In hy he gert draw the cleket;
And smertly swappyt owt a stane,
Ewyn our the sow the stane is gane,
And behind it a litill way
It fell: and then they cryt, 'Hey!'
That war in hyr, 'furth to the wall,
'For dredles it is ours all!'

"The gynour then deliuerly
Gert bend the gyn in full gret hy;
And the stane smertly swappyt out.
It flaw out quethyr, and with a rout,
And fell rycht ewyn befor the sow.
Thair harts than begouth to grow.
Bot yhet than, with thair mychis all
Thai pressyt the sow towart the wall;
And has hyr set tharto gentilly.
The gynour than gert bend in hy
The gyne, and wappyt owt the stane.
That ewyn towart the lyft is gane,
And with gret wycht syne duschyt doun,
Rycht be the wall in a randoun;
And hyt the sow in sic maner,
That it that wes the maist sowar,
And starkast forto stynt a stark,
In sundre with that dusche it brak.
The men than owt in full gret hy
And on the wallis thai gan cry,
That thair sow wes feryt thar.
Jhon Crab, that had hys geer all yar,
In hys fagaldis has set the fyr.
And our the wall syne gan thai wyr,
And brynt the sow till brunds bar."

The Brace, book xvii.

The *springalds*, used in defence of the castle of Lauder, were *balistæ*, or large crossbows wrought by machinery, and capable of throwing stones, beams, and huge darts. They were numbered among the heavy artillery of the age; "Than the kynge made all his navy to draw along, by the cost of the Downes, every ship well

garnished with bombardes, cros-bowes, archers, *springalls*, and other artillare."—FROISSART.

Goads, or sharpened bars of iron, were an obvious and formidable missile weapon. Thus, at the assault of Rochemiglion, "They within cast out great barres of iron, and pots with lyme, wherewith they hurt divers Englishmen, such as adventured themselves too far."—FROISSART, vol. i. cap. 108.

From what has been noticed, the attack and defence of Lauder castle will be found strictly conformable to the manners of the age; a circumstance of great importance, in judging of the antiquity of the ballad. There is no mention of guns, though these became so common in the latter part of the reign of Edward III., that at the siege of St Maloes, "the English had well a four hondred gonnes, who shot day and night into the fortrysse, and agaynst it."—FROISSART, vol. i. cap. 336. Barbour informs us, that guns, or "crakis of wer," as he calls them, and crests for helmets, were first seen by the Scottish, in their skirmishes with Edward the Third's host in Northumberland, A.D. 1327.

NOTE B.

Now, will you go, my brethren two,
And try some jeopardy?—P. 320, v. 2.

The romantic custom of achieving, or attempting, some desperate and perilous adventure, without either necessity or cause, was a peculiar, and perhaps the most prominent, feature of chivalry. It was not merely the duty, but the pride and delight, of a true knight, to perform such exploits, as no one but a madman would have undertaken. I think it is in the old French romance of *Erec and Eneide*, that an adventure, the access to which lay through an avenue of stakes, garnished with the bloody heads of the knights who had attempted and failed to achieve it, is called by the inviting title of *La joie de la Cour*. To be first in advancing, or last in retreating; to strike upon the gate of a certain fortress of the enemy; to fight blindfold, or with one arm tied up; to carry off a

banner, or to defend one, were often the subjects of a particular vow among the sons of chivalry. Until some distinguishing exploit of this nature, a young knight was not said to have *won his spurs;* and, upon some occasions, he was obliged to bear, as a mark of thraldom, a chain upon his arm, which was removed with great ceremony, when his merit became conspicuous. These chains are noticed in the romance of *Jehan de Santré.* In the language of German chivalry, they were called *Ketten des Gelubdes* (fetters of duty.) Lord Herbert of Cherbury informs us, that the Knights of the Bath were obliged to wear certain strings, of silk and gold, upon their left arm, until they had achieved some noble deed of arms. When Edward III. commenced his French wars, many of the young bachelors of England bound up one of their eyes with a silk ribbon, and swore, before the peacock and the ladies, that they would not see with both eyes until they had accomplished certain deeds of arms in France.—FROISSART, cap. 28.

A remarkable instance of this chivalrous frenzy occurred during the expedition of Sir Robert Knowles, who, in 1370, marched through France, and laid waste the country, up to the very gates of Paris. "There was a knight, in their companye, had made a vowe, the day before, that he wolde ryde to the walles or gates of Parys, and stryke at the barryers with his speare. And, for the fournyshing of his vowe, he departed fro his companye, his speare in his fyst, his shelde about his neck, armed at all pecesse, on a good horsse, his squyer on another, behind him, with his bassenet. And whan he approached near to Parys, he toke and dyde on his helme, and left his squyre behind hym, and dashed his spurres to his horsse, and came gallopynge to the barryers, the whiche as then were opyn; and the lordes, that were there, had wened he wolde have entred into the towne; but that was not his mynde; for, when he hadde stryken at the barryers, as he had before avowed, he towrned his reyne, and drue back agayne, and departed. Then the knightes of France, that sawe hym depart, sayd to him, 'Go your waye; you have ryghte well acquitted yourself.' I can nat tell you what was thys knyghtes name, nor of what contre; but the blazure of his armes was, goules, two fesses sable, a border sable. Howbeit, in the subbarbes, he had a sore encontre; for,

as he passed on the pavement, he founde before hym a bocher, a bigge man, who had well sene this knighte pass by. And he helde in his handes a sharpe heavy axe, with a long poynt; and as the knight returned agayne, and toke no hede, this bocher came on his side, and gave the knyght such a stroke, betwene the neck and the shulders, that he reversed forwarde heedlynge, to the neck of his horsse, and yet he recovered agayne. And then the bocher strake hym agayne, so that the axe entered into his body, so that, for payne, the knyghte fell to the earthe, and his horsse ran away, and came to the squyer, who abode for his mayster at the stretes ende. And so, the squyer toke the horsse, and had gret marveyle what was become of his mayster; for he had well sene him ryde to the barryers, and stryke thereat with his glayve, and retourne agayne. Thanne he rode a lytell forthe, thyderwarde, and anone he saw where his master layn upon the erthe, bytwene foure men, layenge on him strokes, as they wolde have stryken on a stethey (*anvil*); and than the squyer was so affreyed, that he durst go no farther: for he sawe well he could nat help his mayster. Therefore he retourned as fast as he myght: so there the sayd knyghte was slayne. And the knyghtes, that were at the gate, caused hym to be buried in holy ground."—FROISSART, ch. 281.

A similar instance of a military jeopardy occurs in the same author, ch. 364. It happened before the gates of Troyes. "There was an Englyshe squyre, borne in the bishopryke of Lincolne, an expert man of arms; I can nat say whyder he could se or nat; but he spurred his horse, his speare in his hande, and his targe about his necke; his horse came rushyng downe the waye, and lept clene over the barres of the baryers, and so galoped to the gate, where as the Duke of Burgoyne and the other lordes of France were, who reputed that dede for a great enterprise. The squyre thoughte to have returned, but he could nat; for his horse was stryken with speares, and beaten downe, and the squyr slain; wherewith the Duke of Burgoyne was right sore displeased.

Note. C.

Wilt thou lend me our King's standard,
To bear a little way?—P. 321, v. 1.

In all ages, and in almost all countries, the military standards have been objects of respect to the soldiery, whose duty it is to range beneath them, and, if necessary, to die in their defence. In the ages of chivalry, these ensigns were distinguished by their shape, and by the various names of banners, pennons, penoncelles, &c., according to the number of men who were to fight under them. They were displayed in the day of battle, with singular solemnity, and consigned to the charge only of such as were thought willing and able to defend them to the uttermost. When the army of Edward the Black Prince was drawn up against that of Henry the Bastard, King of Castile, "Than Sir Johan Chandos brought his baner, rolled up togyder, to the Prince, and said, 'Sir, behold, here is my baner. I requyre you display it abrode, and give me leave this daye to raise it; for, sir, I thanke God and you, I have land and heritage sufficiente to maynteyne it withal.' Than the Prince, and King Dampeter (Don Pedro), toke the baner betwene their hands, and spred it abrode, the which was of sylver, a sharp pyle gaules, and delyvered it to hym, and said, 'Sir Johan, behold here youre baner; God sende you joye and honour thereof!" Than Sir Johan Chandos bare his baner to his owne companye, and sayde, 'Sirs, beholde here my baner, and youres; kepe it as your owne.' And they toke it, and were right joyful thereof, and sayd, that by the pleasure of God, and Saint George, they would kepe and defend it to the best of their powers. And so the baner abode in the handes of a good English squyer, called William Alery, who bare it that day, and acquaytted himself right nobly."—Froissart, vol. i. ch. 237. The loss of a banner was not only great dishonour, but an infinite disadvantage. At the battle of Cocherel, in Normandy, the flower of the combatants, on each side, were engaged in the attack and defence of the banner of the captall of Buche, the English leader. It was planted amid a bush of thorns, and

guarded by sixty men at arms, who defended it gallantly. "There were many rescues, and many a one hurt and cast to the earth, and many feates of armes done, and many gret strokes given, with good axes of steel, that it was wonder to behold." The battle did not cease until the captall's standard was taken and torn to pieces.

We learn, from the following passage in STOWE'S *Chronicle*, that the standard of Edward I. was a golden dragon. "The King entered Wales with an army, appointing the footmen to occupie the enemies in fight, whiles his horsemen, in a wing, set on the rere battell; himselfe, with a power, kept his place, where he pight his golden dragon, unto whiche, as to a castle, the wounded and wearied might repair."

NOTE D.

"*Where wast thou bred? where wast thou born?*
Where, or in what countrie?"—
"*In north of England I was born:*"
(It needed him to lie.)—P. 321, v. 2.

STRATAGEMS, such as that of Maitland, were frequently practised with success, in consequence of the complete armour worn by the knights of the middle ages. In 1359, Edward III. entered France, to improve the success of the battle of Poictiers. Two French knights, Sir Galahaut of Rybamont, and Sir Roger of Cologne, rode forth, with their followers, to survey the English host, and, in short, to seek adventures. It chanced that they met a foraging party of Germans, retained in King Edward's service, under the command of Reynold of Boulant, a knight of that nation. By the counsel of a squire of his retinue, Sir Galahaut joined company with the German knight, under the assumed character of Bartholomew de Bonne, Reynold's countryman and fellow-soldier in the English service. The French knights "were a 70 men of armes, and Sir Renolde had not past a 30; and, whan Sir Renolde saw theym, he displayed his baner befor hym, and came softely rydynge towarde theym, wenyng to him that they had been Eng-

lyshemen. Whan he approached, he lyft up hys vyser, and saluted Sir Galahaut, in the name of Sir Bartylmewe de Bonnes. Sir Galahaut helde himselfe styll secrete, and answered but fayntly, and sayd, 'Let us ryde forth;' and so rode on, and hys men, on the one syde, and the Almaygnes on the other. Whan Sir Renolde of Boulant saw theyr maner, and how Sir Galahaut rode sometyme by hym, and spake no word, than he begane to suspecte. And he had not so ryden, the space of a quarter of an hour, but he stode styll, under his baner, among his men, and sayd, 'Sir, I have doubt what knyght ye be. I thinke ye be nat Sir Bartylmewe, for I knowe him well: and I see well that yt ys nat you. I woll ye tell me your name, or I ryde any farther in your company.' Therewith Sir Galahaut lyft up hys vyser, and rode towards the knyght to have taken hym by the raynse of his brydell, and cryed, '*Our Ladye of Rybamont!*' Than Sir Roger of Coloyne said,[1] '*Coloyne to the rescue!*'[1] Whan Sir Renolde of Boulant sawe what case he was in, he was nat greatly afrayd, but drewe out his sworde; and, as Sir Galahaut wolde have taken hym by the brydell, Sir Reynolde put his sworde clene through hym, and drue agayne hys sworde out of him, and toke his horse, with the spurres, and left Sir Galahaut sore hurt. And, whan Sir Galahautes men sawe theyr master in that case, they were sore dyspleased, and set on Sir Renoldes men; theyre were many caste to the yerth, but as sone as Sir Renolde had given Sir Galahaut that stroke, he strak his horse with the spurres, and toke the feldes. Than certayne of Galahautes squyers chasyd hym, and, whan he sawe that they followed hym so nere, that he muste other tourne agayne, or els be shamed, lyke a hardy knyghte he tourned, and abode the foremost, and gave hym such a stroke, that he had no more lyste to folwe him. And thus, as he rede on, he served three of theym, that folowed hym, and wounded them sore; if a good axe had been in hys hand, at every stroke he had slayne a man. He dyd so muche, that he was out of danger of the Frenchmen, and saved himselfe without any hurte; the whyche hys enemyes reputed for a grete prowess, and so dyd all other that harde thereof; but hys men

[1] The war-cries of their families.

were nere slayne or taken, but few that were saved. And Sir Galahaut was caryed from thence sore hurt to Perone; of that hurt he was never after perfectly hole; for he was a knycht of suche courage, that, for all his hurte, he would not spare hymselfe; wherefore he lived not long after."—FROISSART, vol. i. chap. 207.

NOTE E.

They rade their horse, they ran their horse,
Then hovered on the lee, &c.—P. 327, v. 4.

THE sieges, during the middle ages, frequently afforded opportunity for single combat, of which the scene was usually the drawbridge, or barriers, of the town. The former, as the more desperate place of battle, was frequently chosen by knights, who chose to break a lance for honour and their ladies' love. In 1387, Sir William Douglas, Lord of Nithsdale, upon the drawbridge of the town of Carlisle, consisting of two beams, hardly two feet in breadth, encountered and slew, first, a single champion of England, and afterwards two, who attacked him together.—*Fordun Scotichronicon*, lib. xiv. chap. 51.

"He brynt the suburbys of Carlele
And at the bareris he faucht sa wel,
That on thare bryg he slew a man,
The wychtast that in the town wes than:
Quhare, on a plank of twa feet brade
He stude, and swa gude payment made,
That he feld twa stout fechteris,
And but skath went till his feres."
WYNTOWN'S *Cronykil*, book ix. chap. 8.

These combats at the barriers, or palisades, which formed the outer fortification of a town, were so frequent, that the mode of attack and defence was early taught to the future knight, and continued long to be practised in the games of chivalry. The custom, therefore, of defying the inhabitants of a besieged town to this sort

of contest, was highly fashionable in the middle ages; and an army could hardly appear before a place, without giving rise to a variety of combats at the barriers, which were, in general, conducted without any unfair advantage being taken on either part.

The following striking example of this romantic custom occurs in Froissart. During the French wars of Edward the Black Prince, and in the year 1370, a body of English, and of adventurers retained in his service, approached the city of Noyon, then occupied by a French garrison, and arrayed themselves, with displayed banners, before the town, defying the defenders to battle. "There was a Scottysh knyghte[1] dyde there a goodly feate of armes, for he departed fro his companye. hys speare in hys hand, and mounted on a good horse, hys page behynde hym, and so came before the barryers. Thys knyght was called Sir Johan Assueton,[2] a hardy man and a couragyous. Whan he was before the barryers of Noyon, he lyghted a-fote, and sayd to hys page, 'Holde, kepe my horse, and departe nat hens;' and so wente to the barryers. And wythyn the barryers there were good knyghts; as, Sir John of Roy, Sir Lancelot of Loutys, and a x or xii other, who had grete marveyle what thys sayde knyght wolde do. Then he sayde to them, 'Sirs, I am come hyder to se you. I se well, ye wyll nat issue out of your barryers; therefore I will entre, and I can and wyll prove my knyghthode agaynst yours; wyn me and you can.' And therewyth he layde on round about hym, and they at hym. And thus, he alone fought agaynst them, more than an hour; and dyd hurte two or three of them; so that they of the towne, on the walles and garrettes, stode still, and behelde them, and had great pleasure to regarde his valyauntnes, and dyd him no hurte; the whiche they myght have done, if they hadde list to have shotte, or cast stones at hym. And also the French knyghtes charged them to

[1] By the terms of the peace betwixt England and Scotland, the Scottish were left at liberty to take service either with France or England, at their pleasure. Sir Robert Knolles, therefore, who commanded the expedition, referred to in the text, had under his command a hundred Scottish spears.

[2] *Assueton* is a corruption for Swinton. Sir John Swinton of Swinton was a Scottish champion, noted for his courage and gigantic stature. [Sir John Swinton was one of Sir Walter Scott's own ancestors.—ED.]

let hym and them alone togyder. So long they foughte, that at last, his page came near to the barryers, and spake in his language, and sayd, 'Sir, come awaye; it is time for you to departe, for your cumpanye is departying hens.' The knyghte harde hym well, and then gave a two or three strokes about him, and so, armed as he was, he lept out of the barryers, and lepte upon his horse, without any hurte, behynde his page; and sayd to the Frenchmen, 'Aduc, sirs! I thank you;' and so rode forthe to his own cumpanye. The whiche dede was moche praysed of many folkes."—FROISSART, cap. 278.

The barriers, so often alluded to, are described, by the same admirable historian, to be grated palisades, the grates being about half a foot wide. In a skirmish before Honycourt, Sir Henry of Flanders ventured to thrust his sword so far through one of those spaces, that a sturdy abbot, who was within, seized his sword-arm, and drew it through the barriers, up to the shoulder. In this awkward situation he remained for some time, being unwilling to dishonour himself by quitting his weapon. He was at length rescued, but lost his sword; which Froissart afterwards saw preserved, as a relic, in the monastery of Honycourt.—Vol. I. chap. 39. For instances of single combats, at the barriers, see the same author, *passim*.

NOTE F.

But, wi' the poll-axe in his hand,
Upon the brigg sprang he.—P. 328, v. 2.

The battle-axe, of which there are many kinds, was a knightly weapon, much used in the middle ages, as well in single combat as in battle. "And also there was a young bachelor, called Bertrande of Glesguyne, who, during the seige, fought wyth an Englyshman called Sir Nycholas Dagerne; and that battayle was takene thre courses wythe a speare, thre strokes wyth an axe, and thre wyth a dagger. And eche of these knyghtes bare themselves so valyantly, that they departed fro the felde wythout any damage, and they were well regarded, bothe of theyme wythyn, and they

wythout." This happened at the siege of Rennes, by the Duke of Lancaster, in 1357.— FROISSART, vol. i. c. 175. With the same weapon Godfrey of Harcour long defended himself, when surprised and defeated by the French. "And Sir Godfraye's men kepte nó good array, nor dyd nat as they had promised; moost part of theyme fledde; whan Sir Godfraye sawe that, he sayde to hymselfe, how he had rather there be slayne than be taken by the Frenchmen; there *he toke hys axe in hys handes, and set fast the one legge before the other, to stonde the more surely; for hys one legge was a lytell crooked, but he was strong in the armes.* Ther he fought valyantly and long; none durste well abyde hys strokes; than two Frenchmen mounted on theyr horses, and ranne both with their spears at once at hym, and so bare him to the yerth; then other, that were a-fote, came wyth theyr swerdes, and strake hym into the body, under his harneys, so that ther he was slayne." —*Ibid.* chap. 172. The historian throws Sir Godfrey into a striking attitude of desperation.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN.

him To ride to Eng----land to

drive a prey.

THE

BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

THE SCOTTISH EDITION.

THE following ballad of the Battle of Otterbourne, being essentially different from that which is published in the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol. i., and being obviously of Scottish composition, claims a place in the present collection. The particulars of that noted action are related by Froissart, with the highest encomiums upon the valour of the combatants on each side. James, Earl of Douglas, with his brother the Earl of Murray, in 1387, invaded Northumberland at the head of 3000 men, while the Earls of Fife and Strathern, sons to the King of Scotland, ravaged the Western Borders of England, with a still more numerous army. Douglas penetrated as far as Newcastle, where the renowned Hotspur lay in garrison. In a skirmish before the walls, Percy's lance, with the pennon, or guidon, attached to it, was taken by Douglas—as most authors affirm, in a personal encounter betwixt the two heroes. The Earl shook the pennon aloft, and swore he would carry it as his spoil

into Scotland, and plant it upon his Castle of Dalkeith. "That," answered Percy, "shalt thou never!" Accordingly, having collected the forces of the Marches, to a number equal, or (according to the Scottish historians) much superior, to the army of Douglas, Hotspur made a night attack upon the Scottish camp, at Otterbourne, about thirty-two miles from Newcastle. An action took place, fought by moonlight, with uncommon gallantry and desperation. At length Douglas, armed with an iron mace, which few but he could wield, rushed into the thickest of the English battalions, followed only by his chaplain, and two squires of his body.[1] Before his followers could come up, their brave leader was stretched on the ground, with three mortal wounds; his squires lay dead by his side; the priest alone, armed with a lance, was protecting his master from farther injury. "I die like my forefathers," said the expiring hero, "in a field of battle, and not on a bed of sickness. Conceal my death, defend my standard,[2] and avenge my fall! it is an old prophecy, that a dead man shall

[1] Their names were Robert Hart and Simon Glendinning. The chaplain was Richard Lundie, afterwards Archdeacon of Aberdeen. —GODSCROFT. Hart, according to Wintoun, was a knight. That historian says, no one knew how Douglas fell.

[2] The banner of Douglas, upon this memorable occasion, was borne by his natural son, Archibald Douglas, ancestor of the family of Cavers, hereditary Sheriffs of Teviotdale, amongst whose archives this glorious relic is still preserved. The Earl, at his onset, is said to have charged his son to defend it to the last drop of his blood.

gain a field,[1] and I hope it will be accomplished this night."—GODSCROFT. With these words he expired; and the fight was renewed with double obstinacy around his body. When morning appeared, however, victory began to incline to the Scottish side. Ralph Percy, brother to Hotspur, was made prisoner by the Earl Mareschal, and shortly after, Harry Percy[2] himself was taken by Lord Montgomery. The number of captives, according to Wintoun, nearly equalled that of the victors. Upon this the English retired, and left the Scots masters of the dear-bought honours of the field. But the Bishop of Durham approaching at the head of a body of fresh forces, not only checked the pursuit of the victors, but made prisoners of some of the stragglers, who had urged the chase too far. The battle was not, however, renewed, as the Bishop of Durham did not venture to attempt the rescue of Percy. The field was fought 15th August, 1388.—FORDUN, FROISSART, HOLLINSHED, GODSCROFT.

The ground on which this memorable engagement took place, is now the property of John Davidson, Esq. of Newcastle, and still retains the name of Battle-Cross. A cross, erroneously termed *Percy's Cross*, has been erected upon the spot where the gallant Earl of Douglas is supposed to have fallen. The Castle of Otterbourne, which was besieged by Douglas, with its demesne lands, is now the property of

[1] This prophecy occurs in the ballad as an ominous dream.

[2] Hotspur, for his ransom, built the castle of Penoon, in Ayrshire, belonging to the family of Montgomery, now Earls of Eglintoun

James Ellis, Esq., who is also a proprietor of a neighbouring eminence called Fawdoun hill, on which may yet be discerned the vestiges of the Scottish camp, agreeing with the description of the ballad, "They lighted high on Otterbourn." Earl's Meadows, containing a fine spring called Percy's well, are a part of the same gentleman's grounds, and probably derive their name from the battle. The camp on Fawdoun hill is a mile distant from Battle-Cross; but it must be remembered that the various changes of position and of fortune during so long and fierce an engagement between two considerable armies, must have extended the conflict over all the vicinity.

The ballad published in the *Reliques*, is avowedly an English production; and the author, with a natural partiality, leans to the side of his countrymen: yet that ballad, or some one similar, modified probably by national prejudice, must have been current in Scotland during the reign of James VI.; for Godscroft, in treating of this battle, mentions its having been the subject of popular song, and proceeds thus: "But that which is commonly sung of the *Hunting of Cheviot*, seemeth indeed poetical, and a mere fiction, perhaps to stir up virtue; yet a fiction whereof there is no mention, either in the Scottish or English Chronicle. Neither are the songs that are made of them both one; for the *Scots song made of Otterbourne* telleth the time, about Lammas; and also the occasion, to take preys out of England; also the dividing armies betwixt the Earls of Fife and Douglas, and their

several journeys, almost as in the authentic history. It beginneth thus:

> ' It fell about the Lammas tide,
> When yeomen win their hay,
> The dochty Douglas 'gan to ride,
> In England to take a prey.'"
> GODSCROFT, ed. Edin. 1743, vol. i. p. 195.

I cannot venture to assert, that the stanzas, here published, belong to the ballad alluded to by Godscroft; but they come much nearer to his description than the copy published in the first edition,[1] which re-

[1] ["Out then spoke a bonny boy,
That serv'd ane o' Earl Douglas' kin—
' Methinks I see an English host,
A coming branking us upon.'
" ' If this be true, thou little foot page,
If this be true thou tells to me,
The brawest bower in Otterbourne
Shall be thy morning's fee.
" ' But if it be false, thou little boy!
But and a lie thou tells to me,
On the highest tree in Otterbourne,
Wi' my ain hands, I'll hang the hie!'
" The boy has ta'en out his little penknife,
That hung right low down by his gare,
And he gave Lord Douglas a deadly wound,
I wot a deep wound and a sare.
" Earl Douglas to the Montgomery said,
' Take thou the vanguard of the three;
And bury me by the braken bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee.'"]
Minstrelsy, 1st Edit. Vol. i. p. 32.

presented Douglas as falling by the poniard of a faithless page. Yet we learn from the same author, that the story of the assassination was not without foundation in tradition.—"There are that say, that he [Douglas] was not slain by the enemy, but by one of his own men, a groom of his chamber, whom he had struck the day before with a truncheon, in ordering of the battle, because he saw him make somewhat slowly to. And they name this man John Bickerton of Luffness, who left a part of his armour behind unfastened, and when he was in the greatest conflict, this servant of his came behind his back, and slew him thereat."—GODSCROFT, *ut supra*.—"But this narration," adds the historian, "is not so probable."[1] Indeed it seems to have no foundation, but the common desire of assigning some remote and extraordinary cause for the death of a great man. The following ballad is also inaccurate in many other particulars, and is much shorter and more indistinct, than that printed in the *Reliques*, although many verses are

[1] Wintoun assigns another cause for Douglas being carelessly armed:

"The Erle Jamys was sa besy,
For till ordane his company,
And on his fays for to pas,
That reckles he of his armyng was;
The Erle of Mwrrawys bassenet,
That sayd, at thot tyme was ferryhete."

Book VIII. Chap. 7.

The circumstance of Douglas' omitting to put on his helmet occurs in the ballad.

almost the same. Hotspur, for instance, is called *Earl Percy*, a title he never enjoyed. Neither was Douglas buried on the field of battle, but in Melrose Abbey, where his tomb is still shewn.

This song was first published from Mr Herd's *Collection of Scottish Songs and Ballads*, Edin. 1774, 2 vols. octavo; but fortunately two copies have since been obtained from the recitation of old persons residing at the head of Ettrick Forest, by which the story is brought out, and completed in a manner much more correspondent to the true history.

I cannot dismiss the subject of the battle of Otterbourne, without stating (with all the deference due to the father of this species of literature) some doubts which have occurred to an ingenious correspondent, and an excellent antiquary, concerning the remarks on the names subjoined to the ballads of Chevy Chace and Otterbourne, in the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol i. p. 34, 4th edition.

"John de Lovele, Sheriff of Northumberland, 34th Hen. VII.," is evidently a mistake, as Henry VII. did not reign quite twenty-four years; but the person meant was probably John de Lavale, knight, of Delavale Castle, who was sheriff, 34th Henry VIII. There seems little doubt that this was the person called in the ballad "the gentil Lovel." Sir Raff the rich Rugbe, was probably Sir Ralph Neville of Raby Castle, son of the first Earl of Westmoreland, and cousin-german to

Hotspur. In the more modern edition of the ballad, he is expressly called Sir Ralph Raby, *i. e.* of Raby.

With respect to the march of Douglas, as described in the ballad, it appears that he entered Northumberland from the westward. Redesdale, Rothely-crags, and Green Leighton, are a few miles eastward of Otterbourne. Otterscope hill lies south-west from Green Leighton.

The celebrated Hotspur, son of the first Earl of Northumberland, was, in 1385, Governor of Berwick, and Warden of the East Marches; in which last capacity it was his duty to repel the invasion of Douglas.

Sir Henry Fitzhugh, mentioned in the ballad, was one of the Earl of Northumberland's commanders at the battle of Homeldown.

As to the local situation of Otterbourne, it is thirty statute miles from Newcastle, though Buchanan has diminished the distance to eight miles only.

The account given of Sir John of Agurstone seems also liable to some doubt. This personage is supposed by Bishop Percy to have been one of the Hagerstons of Hagerston, a Northumbrian family, who, according to the fate of war, were sometimes subjects of Scotland. I cannot, however, think, that at this period, while the English were in possession both of Berwick and Roxburgh, with the intermediate fortresses of Wark, Cornhill, and Norham, the Scots possessed any part of Northumberland, much less a manor which lay within that strong chain of castles. I should presume

the person alluded to rather to have been one of the Rutherfords, Barons of Edgerstane, or Edgerston, a warlike family, which has long flourished on the Scottish Borders, and who were, at this very period, retainers of the house of Douglas. The same notes contain an account of the other Scottish warriors of distinction who were present at the battle. These were, the Earls of Monteith, Buchan, and Huntly; the Barons of Maxwell and Johnston; Swinton of that ilk; an ancient family, which about that period produced several distinguished warriors; Sir David (or rather, as the learned Bishop well remarks, Sir Walter) Scott of Buccleuch, Stewart of Garlies, and Murray of Cockpool.

> "*Regibus et legibus, Scotici constantes.*
> *Vos clypeis et gladiis pro patriis pugnantes,*
> *Vestra est victoria, vestri est et gloria,*
> *In cántu et historia, perpes est memoria!*"

THE

BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

He chose the Gordons[1] and the Græmes,[2]
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;[3]
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.[4]

And he has burn'd the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire;

[1] See Note A, p. 363.—[2] See Note B, p. 365.—[3] See Note C, p. 365.

[4] The Jardines were a clan of hardy West-Border men. Their chief was Jardine of Applegirth. Their refusal to ride with Douglas was, probably, the result of one of those perpetual feuds, which usually rent to pieces a Scottish army.

And three good towers on Reidswire fells,
He left them all on fire.

And he march'd up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about;
" O wha's the lord of this castle,
Or wha's the lady o't?"—

But up spake proud Lord Percy, then,
And O but he spake hie!
" I am the lord of this castle,
My wife's the lady gay."

" If thou'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me!
For, ere I cross the Border fells,
The tane of us shall die."—

He took a lang spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there,
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady look'd,
Frae aff the castle wa',
When down before the Scottish spear
She saw proud Percy fa'.

" Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;[1]
But your sword sall gae wi' me."—

" But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And wait there dayis three;
And, if I come not ere three dayis end,
A fause knight ca' ye me."—

" The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne,
To feed my men and me.

" The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild from tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale,
To fend[2] my men and me.

" Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you shall welcome be;
And, if ye come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll ca' thee."—

[1] *Fell*—Hide. Douglas insinuates, that Percy was rescued by his soldiers.

[2] *Fend*—Support.

"Thither will I come," proud Percy said,
"By the might of Our Ladye!"—
"There will I bide thee," said the Douglas,
"My troth I plight to thee."

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down.

And he that had a bonnie boy,
Sent out his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
His ain servant he was.[1]

But up then spake a little page,
Before the peep of dawn—
"O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand."—

"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
Sae loud I hear ye lie:

[1] Froissart describes a Scottish host, of the same period, as consisting of "IIII. M. men of armes, knightis, and squires, mounted on good horses; and other X. M. men of warre, armed, after their gyse, right hardy and firse, mounted on lytle hackneys, the whiche were never tied, nor kept at hard meat, but leite go to pasture in the fieldis and bushes."—*Chronykle of Froissart*, translated by Lord Berners, chap. xvii.

For Percy had not men yestreen'
To dight my men and me.

"But I have dream'd a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I."

The *English* ballad has here:—

"'Now, by my troth,' the Douglas sayed,
'It ys but a fayned tayle;
He durst not looke on my broad banner,
For all Ynglande so haylle.'

"He stepped owt at his pavelyon door,
To loke an it were lesse;
'Araye you, lordyngs, one and all,
For here begynnes no peace.

"'The Yerle of Mentaye[1] thou art my eme,[2]
The forwarde I give to thee;
The Yerle of Huntley, cawte and kene,
He shall with thee be.

"'The Lord of Bouchan in armure bright,
On the other hand he shall be;
Lord Johnstone and Lord Maxwell,
They two shall be with me.

"'Swinton, fayre field upon your pride,
For battle make you boun;
Syr Davy Scott, Syr Walter Stewarde,
Syr Jhon of Agurstone.'"

[1] Menteith.—[2] Uncle.

He belted on his guid braid sword,
And to the field he ran;
But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain.

When Percy wi' the Douglas met,
I wat he was fu' fain!
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat
And the blood ran down like rain.[1]

But Percy with his good broad sword,
That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.

Then he call'd on his little foot-page,
And said—"Run speedilie,
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

"My nephew good," the Douglas said,
"What recks the death of ane!

[1] "The Percy and the Douglas mette,
That ether of other was fayne;
They schapped together whyll that they sweette,
With swords of fine Collayne,[1]
Tyll the bloode from their bassonets ran,
As the brooke doth in the rayne."

English Ballad.

[1] Cologne steel.

Last night I dream'd a dreary dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain.

"My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken[1] bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

"O bury me by the braken bush,
Beneath the blooming brier,
Let never living mortal ken.
That ere a kindly Scot lies here."

He lifted up that noble lord,
Wi' the saut tear in his ee;
He hid him in the braken bush,
That his merrie-men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But mony a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons good, in English blood,
They steep'd their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
Till all the fray was done.

[1] *Braken*—Fern.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;
They swapped swords, and they twa swat,
And aye the blood ran down between.

"Now yield thee, yield thee, Percy," he said,
"Or else I vow I'll lay thee low!"—
"To whom must I yield," quoth Earl Percy,
"Now that I see it must be so?"—

"Thou shalt not yield to lord nor loun,
Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee!"—

"I will not yield to a braken bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here."

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,[1]
He struck his sword's point in the gronde;

[1] [In one copy the line stands:
"As soon as he knew it was Sir Hugh."—Ed.]

The Montgomery was a courteous knight,
And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at Otterbourne
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken bush,
And the Percy led captive away.

* * * * * * *

[1] [Here the English ballad of Otterbourne has that exquisite verse, almost the same as in the elder Chevy Chase:

"Then on the morn they made them beeres
Of birch and hazell gray;
Mony a widow with weeping tears,
Their makes they fette away."]

*

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

He chose the Gordons.—P. 354, v. 2.

THE illustrious family of Gordon was originally settled upon the lands of Gordon and Huntly, in the shire of Berwick, and are, therefore, of Border extraction. The steps by which they removed from thence to the shires of Aberdeen and Inverness, are worthy of notice. In 1300, Adam de Gordon was Warden of the Marches.—RYMER, vol. ii. p. 870. He obtained, from Robert the Bruce, a grant of the forfeited estate of David de Strathbolgie, Earl of Athol; but no possession followed, the earl having returned to his allegiance.—John de Gordon, his great grandson, obtained, from Robert II., a new charter of the lands of Strathbolgie, which had been once more and finally forfeited by David, Earl of Athol, slain in the battle of Kilblane. This grant is dated 13th July, 1376. John de Gordon, who was destined to transfer, from the Borders of England to those of the Highlands, a powerful and martial race, was himself a redoubted warrior, and many of his exploits occur in the annals of that turbulent period. In 1371-2, the English Borderers invaded and plundered the lands of Gordon, on the Scottish East March. Sir John of Gordon retaliated, by an incursion on Northumberland, where he collected much spoil. But as he returned with his booty, he was attacked, at unawares, by Sir John Lilburne, a Northumbrian, who, with

a superior force, lay near Carham in ambush, to intercept him. Gordon harangued and cheered his followers, charged the English gallantly, and, after having himself been five times in great peril, gained a complete victory, slaying many Southrons, and taking their leader and his brother captive. According to the Prior of Lochlevin, he was desperately wounded; but

> "There rays a welle grete renowne,
> And gretly prysyd wes gud Gordown."

Shortly after this exploit, Sir John of Gordon encountered and routed Sir Thomas Musgrave, a renowned English Marchman, whom he made prisoner. The Lord of Johnstone had, about the same time, gained a great advantage on the West Border; and hence, says Wyntoun,

> "He and the Lord of Gordowne
> Had a soverane gud renown,
> Of ony that war of thare degré,
> For full thai war of gret bounté."

Upon another occasion, Sir John of Gordon is said to have partially succeeded in the surprisal of the town of Berwick, although the superiority of the garrison obliged him to relinquish his enterprise.

The ballad is accurate, in introducing this warrior, with his clan, into the host of Douglas at Otterbourne. Perhaps, as he was in possession of his extensive northern domains, he brought to the field the northern broadswords, as well as the lances of his eastern Borderers. With his gallant leader, he lost his life in the deadly conflict. The English ballad commemorates his valour and prudence:

> "The Yerle of Huntley, cawte and kene."

But the title is a premature designation. The Earldom of Huntly was first conferred on Alexander Seaton, who married the granddaughter of the hero of Otterbourne, and assumed his title from Huntly, in the north. Besides his eldest son Adam, who carried on the line of the family, Sir John de Gordon left two sons, known in tradition by the familiar names of *Jock* and *Tam*. The former

was the ancestor of the Gordons of Pitlurg; the latter of those of Lesmoir, and of Craig-Gordon. This last family is now represented by James Gordon, Esq. of Craig, being the eleventh, in direct descent, from Sir John de Gordon.

NOTE B.

. . . . *and the Græmes.*—P. 354, v. 2.

THE clan of Græme, always numerous and powerful upon the Border, were of Scottish origin, and deduce the descent of their chieftain, Græme of Netherby, from John *with the bright sword*, a son of Malice Græme, Earl of Menteith, who flourished in the fourteenth century. Latterly, they *became Englishmen*, as the phrase went, and settled upon the Debateable Land, whence they were transported to Ireland, by James VI., with the exception of a very few respectable families; "because," said his Majesty in a proclamation, "they do all (but especially the Græmes) confess themselves to be no meet persons to live in these countries; and also to the intent their lands may be inhabited by others, of good and honest conversation." But, in the reign of Henry IV., the Græmes of the Border still adhered to the Scottish allegiance, as appears from the tower of Græme in Annandale, Græme's Walls in Tweeddale, and other castles within Scotland, to which they have given their name. The reader is, however, at liberty to suppose, that the Græmes of the Lennox and Menteith, always ready to shed their blood in the cause of their country, on this occasion joined Douglas.

NOTE C.

With them the Lindesays light and gay.—P. 354, v. 2.

THE chief of this ancient family, at the date of the battle of Otterbourne, was David Lindissay, Lord of Glenesk, afterwards

created Earl of Crawford. He was, after the manner of the times, a most accomplished knight. He survived the battle of Otterbourne, and the succeeding carnage of Homildon. In May, 1390, he went to England, to seek adventures of chivalry; and justed, upon London Bridge, against the Lord of Wells, an English knight, with so much skill and success, as to excite among the spectators a suspicion that he was tied to his saddle; which he removed, by riding up to the royal chair, vaulting out of his saddle, and resuming his seat without assistance, although loaded with complete armour. In 1392, Lindsay was nearly slain in a strange manner. A band of Caterans, or wild Highlanders, had broken down from the Grampian Hills, and were engaged in plundering the county of Angus. Walter Ogilvy, the sheriff, and Sir Patrick Gray, marched against them, and were joined by Sir David Lindsay. Their whole retinue did not exceed sixty men, and the Highlanders were above three hundred. Nevertheless, trusting to the superiority of arms and discipline, the knights rushed on the invaders at Gasclune, in the Stormont. The issue was unfortunate. Ogilvy, his brother, and many of his kindred, were overpowered and slain. Lindsay, armed at all points, made great slaughter among the naked Caterans; but as he pinned one of them to the earth with his lance, the dying mountaineer writhed upwards, and, collecting his force, fetched a blow with his broadsword, which cut through the knight's stirrup leather and steel boot, and nearly severed his leg. The Highlander expired, and Lindsay was with difficulty borne out of the field by his followers.—WYNTOWN. Lindsay is also noted for a retort made to the famous Hotspur. At a March meeting, at Haldane Stank, he happened to observe, that Percy was sheathed in complete armour. "It is for fear of the English horsemen," said Percy, in explanation; for he was already meditating the insurrection immortalized by Shakspeare. "Ah! Sir Harry," answered Lindsay, "I have seen you more sorely bested by Scottish footmen than by English horse."—WYNTOWN. Such was the leader of the "*Lindesays light and gay.*"

According to Froissart, there were three Lindsays in the battle of Otterbourne, whom he calls Sir William, Sir James, and Sir Alexander. To Sir James Lindsay there fell "a strange chance

of war," which I give in the words of the old historian. "I shall show you of Sir Mathewe Reedman, (an English warrior, and governor of Berwick,) who was on horsebacke, to save himselfe, for he alone coulde not remedy the matter. At his departynge, Sir James Lindsay was nere him, and sawe Sir Mathewe departed. And this Sir James, to wyn honour, followed in chase Sir Mathewe Reedman, and came so near him, that he myght have stryken hym with hys speare, if he had lyst. Than he said, 'A! Sir Knyght, tourne! it is a shame thus to fly! I am James of Lindsay. If ye will nat tourne, I shall strike you on the backe with my speare.' Sir Mathewe spoke no worde, but struke his hors with his spurres sorer than he did before. In this maner he chased him more than three myles. And at last Sir Mathewe Reedman's hors foundered, and fell under him. Than he stept forthe on the erthe, and drewe out his swerde, and toke corage to defend himselfe. And the Scote thoughte to have stryken him on the brest, but Sir Mathewe Reedman swerved fro the stroke, and the speare point entred into the erthe. Than Sir Mathewe strak asonder the speare wyth his swerde. And whan Sir James Lindsay saw howe he had lost his speare, he cast away the tronchon, and lyghted a-fote, and toke a lytell battell-axe, that he carryed at his backe, and handled it with his one hand, quickly and delyverly, in the whyche feate Scottes be well experte. And than he set at Sir Mathewe, and he defended himselfe properly. Thus they journeyed toguyder, one with an axe, and the other with a swerde, a longe season, and no man to lette them. Fynally, Sir James Lindsay gave the knyght such strokes, and held him so short, that he was putte out of brethe in such wyse, that he yielded himselfe, and sayde, 'Sir James Lindsay, I yelde me to you.'—'Well,' quod he; 'and I receyve you, rescue or no rescue.'—'I am content,' quod Reedman, 'so ye dele wyth me like a good companyon.'—'I shall not fayle that,' quod Lindsay, and so put up his swerde.—'Well,' said Reedman, 'what will ye nowe that I shall do?—I am your prisoner; ye have conquered me: I wolde gladly go agayn to Newcastell, and, within fiftene dayes, I shall come to you into Scotland, where as ye shall assign me.'—'I am content,' quod Lindsay; 'ye shall promyse, by your faythe, to present your-

selfe, within these four weeks, at Edinborowe; and wheresover ye go, to repute yourselfe my prisoner.' All this Sir Mathewe sware, and promised to fulfil."

The warriors parted upon these liberal terms, and Reedman returned to Newcastle. But Lindsay had scarcely ridden a mile, when he met the Bishop of Durham, with 500 horse, whom he rode towards, believing them to be Scottish, until he was too near them to escape. "The byshoppe stepte to him, and sayde, 'Lindsay, ye are taken; yielde ye to me.'—'Who be you?' quod Lindsay.—'I am,' quod he, 'the Byshoppe of Durham.'—'And fro whens come you, sir?' quod Lindsay. 'I come fro the battell,' quod the bishoppe, 'but I strucke never a stroke there. I go back to Newcastell for this night, and ye shal go with me.'—'I may not chuse,' quod Lindsay, 'sith ye will have it so. I have taken, and I am taken; such is the adventures of armes.'"—Lindsay was accordingly conveyed to the bishop's lodgings in Newcastle, and here he was met by his prisoner Sir Matthew Reedman; who "founde him in a studye, lying in a windowe, and sayde, 'What! Sir James Lindsay, what make you here?'—Than Sir James came forth of the studye to him, and sayde, 'By my fayth, Sir Mathewe, fortune hath brought me hyder; for, as soon as I was departed fro you, I mete by chaunce the Byshoppe of Durham, to whom I am prisoner, as ye be to me. I beleve ye shal not nede to come to Edenborowe to me to mak your fynaunce. I think, rather, we shal make an exchange one for another, if the byshoppe be also contente.'—'Well, sir,' quod Reedman, 'we shall accord ryght well toguyder; ye shal dine this day with me; the byshoppe and our men be gone forth to fyght with your men. I can nat tell what we shall know at their retourne.'—'I am content to dine with you,' quod Lindsay."—FROISSART'S *Chronicle*, translated by Bourchier, Lord Berners, vol. i. chap. 146.

"*O gran bontà de' cavalieri antiqui!*
Eran rivali, eran di fè diversi;
E si sentian de gli aspri colpi iniqui
Per tutta la persona anco dolersi;
E pur per selve oscure, e calle iniqui
Insieme van senza sospetta aversi."

L'Orlando

THE SANG

OF

THE OUTLAW MURRAY.

This ballad appears to have been composed about the reign of James V. It commemorates a transaction, supposed to have taken place betwixt a Scottish monarch, and an ancestor of the ancient family of Murray of Philiphaugh, in Selkirkshire. The Editor is unable to ascertain the historical foundation of the tale; nor is it probable that any light can be thrown upon the subject, without an accurate examination of the family charter-chest. It is certain, that, during the civil wars betwixt Bruce and Baliol, the family of Philiphaugh existed, and was powerful; for their ancestor, Archibald de Moravia, subscribes the oath of fealty to Edward I., A.D. 1296. It is, therefore, not unlikely, that, residing in a wild and frontier country, they may have, at one period or other, during these commotions, refused allegiance to the feeble monarch of the day, and thus extorted from him some grant of territory or juris-

diction. It is also certain, that, by a charter from James IV., dated November 30, 1509, John Murray of Philiphaugh is vested with the dignity of heritable Sheriff of Ettrick Forest, an office held by his descendants till the final abolition of such jurisdictions by 28th Geo. II., cap. 23. But it seems difficult to believe, that the circumstances mentioned in the ballad could occur under the reign of so vigorous a monarch as James IV. It is true, that the *Dramatis Personæ* introduced seem to refer to the end of the fifteenth, or beginning of the sixteenth century; but from this it can only be argued, that the author himself lived soon after that period. It may, therefore, be supposed, (unless further evidence can be produced, tending to invalidate the conclusion,) that the bard, willing to pay his court to the family, has connected his grant of the sheriffship by James IV., with some former dispute betwixt the Murrays of Philiphaugh and their sovereign, occurring either while they were engaged upon the side of Baliol, or in the subsequent reigns of David II. and Robert II. and III., when the English possessed great part of the Scottish frontier, and the rest was in so lawless a state as hardly to acknowledge any superior.

At the same time, this reasoning is not absolutely conclusive. James IV. had particular reasons for desiring that Ettrick Forest, which actually formed part of the jointure lands of Margaret, his Queen, should be kept in a state of tranquillity.—Rymer,

vol. xiii. p. 66. In order to accomplish this object, it was natural for him, according to the policy of his predecessors, to invest one great family with the power of keeping order among the rest. It is even probable, that the Philiphaugh family may have had claims upon part of the lordship of Ettrick Forest, which lay intermingled with their own extensive possessions; and, in the course of arranging, not, indeed, the feudal superiority, but the property of these lands, a dispute may have arisen, of sufficient importance to be the groundwork of a ballad.

It is farther probable, that the Murrays, like other Border clans, were in a very lawless state, and held their lands merely by occupancy, without any feudal right. Indeed the lands of the various proprietors in Ettrick Forest, (being a royal demesne,) were held by the possessors, not in property, but as the kindly tenants, or rentallers, of the crown; and it is only about 150 years since they obtained charters, striking the feu-duty of each proprietor at the rate of the quit rent which he formerly paid. This state of possession naturally led to a confusion of rights and claims. The Kings of Scotland were often reduced to the humiliating necessity of compromising such matters with their rebellious subjects, and James himself even entered into a sort of league with Johnnie Faa, the king of the gipsies. Perhaps, therefore, the tradition, handed down in this song, may have had more foundation than it would at present be proper positively to assert.

The merit of this beautiful old tale, it is thought, will be fully acknowledged. It has been, for ages, a popular song in Selkirkshire. The scene is, by the common people, supposed to have been the Castle of Newark upon Yarrow. This is highly improbable, because Newark was always a royal fortress. Indeed, the late excellent antiquarian, Mr Plummer, Sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire, has assured the Editor, that he remembered the *insignia* of the unicorns, &c., so often mentioned in the ballad, in existence upon the old Tower of Hangingshaw, the seat of the Philiphaugh family; although, upon first perusing a copy of the ballad, he was inclined to subscribe to the popular opinion. The Tower of Hangingshaw has been demolished for many years. It stood in a romantic and solitary situation, on the classical banks of the Yarrow. When the mountains around Hangingshaw were covered with the wild copse which constituted a Scottish forest, a more secure stronghold for an outlawed baron can scarcely be imagined.

The tradition of Ettrick Forest bears, that the outlaw was a man of prodigious strength, possessing a baton or club, with which he laid *lee* (*i. e.* waste) the country for many miles round; and that he was at length slain by Buccleuch, or some of his clan, at a little mount, covered with fir-trees, adjoining to Newark Castle, and said to have been a part of the garden.[1] A varying

[1] [The hollow under this mount is called by the country people,

tradition bears the place of his death to have been near to the house of the Duke of Buccleuch's gamekeeper, beneath the castle; and that the fatal arrow was shot by Scott of Haining, from the ruins of a cottage on the opposite side of Yarrow. There were extant, within these twenty years, some verses of a song on his death. The feud, betwixt the Outlaw and the Scots, may serve to explain the asperity with which the chieftain of that clan is handled in the ballad.

In publishing the following ballad, the copy principally resorted to is one, apparently of considerable antiquity, which was found among the papers of the late Mrs Cockburn of Edinburgh, a lady whose memory will be long honoured by all who knew her.[1] Another copy, much more imperfect, is to be found in Glenriddel's MSS. The names are in this last miserably mangled, as is always the case when ballads are taken down from the recitation of persons living at a distance from the scenes in which they are laid. Mr Plummer also gave the Editor a few additional verses, not contained in either copy, which are thrown into what seemed their proper place. There is yet another copy in Mr Herd's MSS., which has been occasionally made use of. Two verses are restored in the present edition, from the recitation of Mr Mungo Park, whose toils

"slain man's lee;" and a number of human bones were found there a few years ago in making a drain. 1830.—Ed.]

[1] [Mrs Cockburn of Ormistoun, the authoress of the "Flowers of the Forest."—Ed.]

during his patient and intrepid travels in Africa, have not eradicated from his recollection the legendary lore of his native country.[1]

The arms of the Philiphaugh family are said by tradition to allude to their outlawed state. They are, indeed, those of a huntsman, and are blazoned thus:—Argent, a hunting-horn sable, stringed and garnished gules, on a chief azure, three stars of the first. Crest, a Demi-Forester, winding his horn, proper. Motto, *Hinc usque superna venabor.*

[1 The cottage in which Mungo Park was born stands nearly opposite to Newark Castle, on the Yarrow.—Ed.]

THE SANG

OF

THE OUTLAW MURRAY.

Ettricke Foreste is a feir foreste,
In it grows manie a semelie trie;
There's hart and hynd, and dae and rae,
And of a' wilde bestis grete plentie.

There's a feir castelle, bigged wi' lyme and stane;
O! gin it stands not pleasauntlie!
In the fore front o' that castelle feir,
Twa unicorns are bra' to see;
There's the picture of a knight, and a ladye bright,
And the grene hollin abune their brie.[1]

There an Outlaw kepis five hundred men;
He keepis a royalle cumpanie!
His merryemen are a' in ae liverye clad,
O' the Lincome grene sae gaye to see;

[1] Brow.

He and his ladye in purple clad,
O! gin they lived not royallie!

Word is gane to our nobil King,
In Edinburgh where that he lay,
That there was an Outlaw in Ettricke Foreste,
Counted him nought, nor a' his courtrie gay.

"I make a vowe," then the gude King said,
"Unto the man that deir bought me,
I'se either be King of Ettricke Foreste,
Or King of Scotlande that Outlaw sall be!"—

Then spake the lord hight Hamilton,[1]
And to the nobil King said he,
"My sovereign prince, sum counsell take,
First at your nobilis, syne at me.

"I redd ye, send yon braw Outlaw till,
And see gif your man cum will he:
Desyre him cum and be your man,
And hald of you yon Foreste frie.

"Gif he refuses to do that,
We'll conquess baith his landis and he!

[1] This is, in most copies, the *earl* hight Hamilton, which must be a mistake of the reciters, as the family did not enjoy that title till 1503.

Or else, we'll throw his castell down,
And make a widowe o' his gaye ladye."—

The King then call'd a gentleman,
James Boyd (the Earle of Arran his brother was he;[1])
When James he cam before the King,
He knelit befor him on his knê.

"Wellcum, James Boyd!" said our nobil King,
"A message ye maun gang for me;
Ye maun hye to Ettricke Foreste,
To yon Outlaw, where bydeth he:

"Ask him of whom he haldis his landis,
Or man, wha may his master be,
And desyre him cum, and be my man,
And hald of me yon Foreste frie.

"To Edinburgh to cum and gang,
His safe warrant I sall gie;
And gif he refuses to do that,
We'll conquess baith his landis and he.

[1] Thomas Boyd, Earl of Arran, was forfeited, with his father and uncle, in 1469, for an attempt on the person of James III. He had a son, James, who was restored, and in favour with James IV. about 1482. If this be the person here meant, we should read, "The Earl of Arran his *son* was he." Gcnriddel's copy reads, "a Highland laird I'm sure was he." Reciters sometimes call the messenger the Laird of Skene.

" Thou mayst vow I'll cast his castell down,
And mak a widowe o' his gaye ladye;
I'll hang his merryemen, payr by payr,
In ony frith where I may them see."—

James Boyd tuik his leave o' the nobil King,
To Ettricke Foreste feir cam he;
Down Birkendale Brae when that he cam,
He saw the feir Foreste wi' his ee.[1]

Baith dae and rae, and harte and hinde,
And of a' wilde bestis great plentie;
He heard the blows that bauldly ring,
And arrows whidderan' hym near bi.

Of that feir castell he got a sight;
The like he neir saw wi' his ee!
On the fore front of that castell feir,
Twa unicorns were gaye to see;
The picture of a knight, and ladye bright,
And the grene hollin abune their brie.

Thereat he spyed five hundred men,
Shuting with bows on Newark Lee;
They were a' in ae livery clad,
O' the Lincome grene sae gaye to see.

1 Birkendale Brae, now commonly called *Birkendailly*, is a steep lescent on the south side of Minch-moor, which separates Tweed-

His men were a' clad in the grene,
The knight was armed capapie,
With a bended bow, on a milk-white steed;
And I wot they rank'd right bonnilie.

Thereby Boyd kend he was master man,
And served him in his ain degrê.
"God mot thee save, brave Outlaw Murray!
Thy ladye, and all thy chyvalrie!"—
"Marry, thou's wellcum, gentleman,
Some king's messenger thou seemis to be."—

"The King of Scotlonde sent me here,
And, gude Outlaw, I am sent to thee;
I wad wot of whom ye hald your landis,
O man, wha may thy master be?"—

"Thir landis are MINE!" the Outlaw said;
"I ken nae King in Christentie;
Frae Soudron[1] I this Foreste wan,
When the King nor his knightis were not to see."—

"He desyres you'l cum to Edinburgh,
And hauld of him this Foreste fre;
And, gif ye refuse to do this,
He'll conquess baith thy landis and thee.

dale from Ettrick Forest; and from the top of which we have the first view of the woods of Hangingshaw, the Castle of Newark, and the romantic dale of Yarrow.

[1] Southron, or English.

He hath vow'd to cast thy castell down,
And mak a widowe o' thy gaye ladye;

"He'll hang thy merryemen, payr by payr,
In ony frith where he may them finde."—
"Ay, by my troth!" the Outlaw said,
"Than wauld I thinke me far behinde.

"Ere the King my feir countrie get,
This land that's nativest to me!
Mony o' his nobilis sall be cauld,
Their ladyes sall be right wearie."—

Then spak his ladye, feir of face,
She seyd, "Without consent of me,
That an Outlaw suld cum befor a King;
I am right rad[1] of treasonrie.
Bid him be gude to his lordis at hame,
For Edinburgh my lord sall nevir see."—

James Boyd tuik his leave o' the Outlaw kene,
To Edinburgh boun is he;
When James he cam before the King,
He knelit lowlie on his kné.

"Welcum, James Boyd!" seyd our nobil King;
"What foreste is Ettricke Foreste frie?"—
"Ettricke Foreste is the feirest foreste
That evir man saw wi' his ee.

[1] Afraid.

" There's the dae, the rae, the hart, the hynde,
And of a' wild bestis grete plentie;
There's a pretty castell of lyme and stane,
O! gif it standis not pleasauntlie!

" There's in the fore front o' that castell,
Twa unicorns, sae bra' to see;
There's the picture of a knight, and a ladye bright,
Wi' the grene hollin abune their brie.

" There the Outlaw keepis five hundred men,
He keepis a royalle cumpanie!
His merryemen in ae livery clad,
O' the Lincome grene sae gaye to see:
He and his ladye in purple clad;
O! gin they live not royallie!

" He says, yon Foreste is his awin;
He wan it frae the Southronie;
Sae as he wan it, sae will he keep it,
Contrair all kingis in Christentie."—

" Gar warn me Perthshire, and Angus baith;
Fife up and downe, and Louthians three,
And graith my horse!" said our nobil King,
" For to Ettricke Forest hie will I me."—

Then word is gane the Outlaw till,
In Ettricke Forest, where dwelleth he,

That the King was cuming to his cuntrie,
To conquess baith his landis and he.

"I mak a vow," the Outlaw said,
"I mak a vow, and that trulie,
Were there but three men to tak my pairt,
Yon King's cuming full deir suld be!"—

Then messengers he called forth,
And bade them hie them speedilye—
"Ane of ye gae to Halliday,
The Laird of the Corehead[1] is he.

"He certaih is my sister's son;
Bid him cum quick and succour me!
The King cums on for Ettricke Foreste,
And landless men we a' will be."—

"What news? What news?" said Halliday;
"Man, frae thy master unto me?"—
"Not as ye wad; seeking your aide;
The King's his mortal enemie."—

"Ay, by my troth!" said Halliday,
"Even for that it repenteth me;
For gif he lose feir Ettricke Foreste,
He'll tak feir Moffatdale frae me.

[1] This is a place at the head of Moffat-water, possessed of old by the family of Halliday.

" I'll meet him wi' five hundred men,
And surely mair, if mae may be;
And before he gets the Foreste feir,
We a' will die on Newark Lee!"—

The Outlaw call'd a messenger,
And bid him hie him speedilye,
To Andrew Murray of Cockpool[1]—
" That man's a deir cousin to me;
Desyre him cum, and make me aide,
With a' the power that he may be."—

" It stands me hard," Andrew Murray said,
" Judge gif it stand na hard wi' me;
To enter against a King wi' crown,
And set my landis in jeopardie!
Yet, if I cum not on the day,
Surely at night he sall me see."—

To Sir James Murray of Traquair,[2]
A message came right speedilye—

[1] This family were ancestors of the Murrays, Earls of Annandale; but the name of the representative, in the time of James IV., was William, not Andrew. Glenriddel's MS. reads, " the country-keeper."

[2] Before the Barony of Traquair became the property of the Stewarts, it belonged to a family of Murrays, afterwards Murrays of Black-barony, and ancestors of Lord Elibank. The old castle was situated on the Tweed. The lands of Traquair were forfeited by Willielmus de Moravia, previous to 1464; for, in that

"What news? What news?" James Murray said,
"Man, frae thy master unto me?"—

"What neids I tell? for weel ye ken
The King's his mortal enemie;
And now he is cuming to Ettricke Foreste,
And landless men ye a' will be."—

"And, by my trothe," James Murray said,
"Wi' that Outlaw will I live and die;
The King has gifted my landis lang syne—
It cannot be nae warse wi' me."

The King was cuming thro' Caddon Ford,[1]
And full five thousand men was he;
They saw the derke Foreste them before,
They thought it awsome for to see.

year, a charter, proceeding upon his forfeiture, was granted by the crown to "Willielmo Douglas de Cluny." Sir James was, perhaps, the heir of William Murray. It would farther seem, that the grant in 1464 was not made effectual by Douglas; for another charter from the crown, dated the 3d February, 1478, conveys the estate of Traquair to James Stewart, Earl of Buchan, son of the Black Knight of Lorne, and maternal uncle to James III., from whom is descended the present Earl of Traquair. The first royal grant not being followed by possession, it is very possible that the Murrays may have continued to occupy Traquair long after the date of that charter. Hence, Sir James might have reason to say, as in the ballad, "The King has gifted my lands lang syne."

[1] A ford on the Tweed, at the mouth of the Caddon Burn, near Yair.

Then spak the Lord, hight Hamilton,
And to the nobil King said he,
" My sovereign liege, sum council tak,
First at your nobilis, syne at me.

" Desyre him mete thee at Permanscore,
And bring four in his cumpanie ;
Five Erles sall gang yoursell befor,
Gude cause that you suld honour'd be.

" And, gif he refuses to do that,
We'll conquess baith his landis and he ;
There sall nevir a Murray, after him,
Hald land in Ettricke Foreste free."—

Then spak the kene Laird of Buckscleuth,
A stalworthe man, and sterne was he—
" For a King to gang an Outlaw till,
Is beneath his state and his dignitie.

" The man that wons yon Foreste intill,
He lives by reif and felonie !
Wherefore, brayd on, my sovereign liege,
Wi' fire and sword we'll follow thee ;
Or, gif your courtrie lords fa' back,
Our Borderers sall the onset gie."—

Then out and spak the nobil King,
And round him cast a wilie ee—

" Now, had thy tongue, Sir Walter Scott,
Nor speak of reif nor felonie:
For, had every honest man his awin kye,
A right puir clan thy name wad be!"—

The King then call'd a gentleman,
Royal banner-bearer there was he;
James Hoppringle of Torsonse, by name;[1]
He cam and knelit upon his knê.

" Wellcum, James Pringle of Torsonse!
A message ye maun gang for me:
Ye maun gae to yon Outlaw Murray,
Surely where bauldly bideth he.

" Bid him mete me at Permanscore,
And bring four in his cumpanie;
Five erles sall cum wi' mysell,
Gude reason I suld honour'd be;

" And gif he refuses to do that,
Bid him luke for nae good o' me!

[1] The honourable name of Pringle, or Hoppringle, is of great antiquity in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire. The old Tower of Torsonse is situated upon the banks of the Gala. I believe the Pringles of Torsonse are now represented by Sir John Pringle of Stitchell. There are three other ancient and distinguished families of this name; those of Whitebank, Clifton, and Torwoodlee.

There sall nevir a Murray, after him,
Have land in Ettricke Forest free."

James cam before the Outlaw kene,
And served him in his ain degré—
"Welcum, James Pringle of Torsonse!
What message frae the King to me?"—

"He bids ye meet him at Permanscore,[1]
And bring four in your cumpany
Five erles sall gang himsell befor,
Nae mair in number will he be.

[1] Permanscore is a very remarkable hollow on the top of a high ridge of hills, dividing the vales of Tweed and Yarrow, a little to the eastward of Minch-moor. It is the outermost point of the lands of Broadmeadows. The Glenriddel MS., which, in this instance, is extremely inaccurate as to names, calls the place of rendezvous, "*The Poor Man's House*," and hints that the Outlaw was surprised by the treachery of the King:—

"Then he was aware of the King's coming,
With hundreds three in company.
'I wot the muckle deel * * * *
He learned Kingis to lie!
For to fetch me here frae among my men,
Here, like a dog for to die.'"

I believe the reader will think with me, that the catastrophe is better, as now printed from Mrs Cockburn's copy. The deceit, supposed to be practised on the Outlaw, is unworthy of the military monarch, as he is painted in the ballad; especially if we admit him to be King James IV.

"And gif you refuse to do that,
(I freely here upgive wi' thee,)
He'll cast yon bonny castle down,
And make a widowe o' that gay ladye.

"He'll loose yon bluidhound Borderers,
Wi' fire and sword to follow thee;
There will nevir a Murray, after thysell,
Have land in Ettrick Foreste free."—

"It stands me hard," the Outlaw said;
"Judge gif it stands na hard wi' me,
Wha reck not losing of mysell,
But a' my offspring after me.

"My merryemen's lives, my widowe's teirs—
There lies the pang that pinches me;
When I am straught in bluidie eard,
Yon castell will be right dreirie.

"Auld Halliday, young Halliday,
Ye sall be twa to gang wi' me;
Andrew Murray, and Sir James Murray,
We'll be nae mae in cumpanie."—

When that they cam before the King,
They fell before him on their knê—
"Grant mercie, mercie, nobil King!
E'en for his sake that dyed on tree."—

"Sicken like mercie sall ye have;
On gallows ye sall hangit be!"—
"Over God's forbode," quoth the Outlaw then,
I hope your grace will bettir be!
Else, ere you come to Edinburgh port,
I trow thin guarded sall ye be:

"Thir landis of Ettricke Foreste fair,
I wan them from the enemie;
Like as I wan them, sae will I keep them,
Contrair a' kingis in Christentie."—

All the nobilis the King about,
Said pitie it were to see him dee—
"Yet grant me mercie, sovereign prince,
Extend your favour unto me!

"I'll give thee the keys of my castell,
Wi' the blessing o' my gay ladye,
Gin thou'lt make me sheriffe of this Foreste,
And a' my offspring after me."—

"Wilt thou give me the keys of thy castell,
Wi' the blessing of thy gaye ladye?
I'se make thee sheriffe of Ettricke Foreste,
Surely while upward grows the tree;
If you be not traitour to the King,
Forfaulted sall thou nevir be."—

"But, Prince, what sall cum o' my men?
When I gae back, traitour they'll ca' me.
I had rather lose my life and land,
Ere my merryemen rebuked me."—

"Will your merryemen amend their lives?
And a' their pardons I grant thee—
Now, name thy landis where'er they lie,
And here I RENDER them to thee."—

"Fair Philiphaugh is mine by right,
And Lewinshope still mine shall be;
Newark, Foulshiells, and Tinnies baith,
My bow and arrow purchased me.

"And I have native steads to me,
The Newark Lee and Hanginshaw;[1]
I have mony steads in the Forest schaw,
But them by name I dinna knaw."

The keys of the castell he gave the King,
Wi' the blessing o' his feir ladye;

[1] In this and the following verse, the ceremony of feudal investiture is supposed to be gone through, by the Outlaw resigning his possessions into the hands of the king, and receiving them back, to be held of him as superior. The lands of Philiphaugh are still possessed by the Outlaw's representative. Hangingshaw and Lewinshope were sold of late years. Newark, Foulshiels, and Tinnies, having long belonged to the family of Buccleuch.

He was made sheriffe of Ettricke Foreste,
  Surely while upward grows the tree;
And if he was na traitour to the King,
  Forfaulted he suld never be.

Wha ever heard, in ony times,
  Sicken an outlaw in his degré,
Sic favour get befor a King,
  As did the OUTLAW MURRAY of the Foreste free?

JOHNIE ARMSTRANG.

THERE will be such frequent occasion, in the course of this work, to mention the clan, or sept, of the Armstrongs, that the Editor finds it necessary to prefix to this ballad some general account of that tribe.

The Armstrongs appear to have been at an early period in possession of great part of Liddesdale, and of the Debateable Land. Their immediate neighbourhood to England rendered them the most lawless of the Border depredators; and as much of the country possessed by them was claimed by both kingdoms, the inhabitants, protected from justice by the one nation, in opposition to the other, securely preyed upon both.[1] The chief was Armstrong of Mangertoun; but, at a later period, they are declared a broken clan, *i.e.* one which had no lawful head, to

[1] In illustration of this position, the reader is referred to a long correspondence betwixt Lord Dacre and the Privy Council of England, in 1550, concerning one Sandye Armstrang, a partisan of England, and an inhabitant of the Debateable Land, who had threatened to become a Scottishman, if he was not protected by the English Warden against the Lord of Maxwell.—See *Introduction to* NICHOLSON *and* BURNS' *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland.*

become surety for their good behaviour. The rapacity of this clan, and of their allies, the Elliots, occasioned the popular saying, "Elliots and Armstrongs ride thieves all." But to what Border family of note, in former days, would not such an adage have been equally applicable? All along the river Liddel may still be discovered the ruins of towers, possessed by this numerous clan. They did not, however, entirely trust to these fastnesses; but, when attacked by a superior force, abandoned entirely their dwellings, and retired into morasses, accessible by paths known to themselves alone. One of their most noted places of refuge was the Tarras Moss, a desolate and horrible marsh, through which a small river takes its course. Upon its banks are found some dry spots, which were occupied by these outlaws, and their families, in cases of emergency. The stream runs furiously among huge rocks, which has occasioned a popular saying—

"Was ne'er ane drown'd in Tarras, nor yet in doubt,
For ere the head can win down, the harns [brains] are out."

The morass itself is so deep, that, according to an old historian, two spears tied together would not reach the bottom. In this retreat, the Armstrongs, *anno* 1588, baffled the Earl of Angus, when lieutenant on the Border, although he reckoned himself so skilful in winding a thief, that he declared "he had the same pleasure in it, as others in hunting a hare."

On this occasion he was totally unsuccessful, and nearly lost his relation, Douglas of Ively, whom the freebooters made prisoner.—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 411.

Upon another occasion the Armstrongs were less fortunate. They had, in one of their incursions, plundered the town of Haltwhistle, on the borders of Cumberland. Sir Robert Carey, Warden of the West Marches, demanded satisfaction from the King of Scotland, and received for answer, that the offenders were no subjects of his, and that he might take his own revenge. The English Warden accordingly entered Liddesdale, and ravaged the lands of the outlaws; on which occasion, *Sim of the Cathill* (an Armstrong) was killed by one of the Ridleys of Haltwhistle. This incident procured Haltwhistle another visit from the Armstrongs, in which they burnt great part of the town, but not without losing one of their leaders, by a shot from a window.

"The death of this young man," says Sir Robert Carey, "wrote [wrought] so deep an impression upon them [the outlaws], as many vowes were made, that before the end of next winter, they would lay the whole Border waste. This [the murder] was done about the end of May [1598.] The chiefe of all these outlaws was *old Sim of Whitram*.[1] He had five or six sonnes,

[1] Whitram is a place in Liddesdale. It is mistaken by the noble editor for Whithern, in Galloway, as is Hartwessel (Haltwhistle, on the borders of Cumberland) for Twisel, a village on the English side of the Tweed, near Wark.

as able men as the Borders had. This old man and his sonnes had not so few as two hundred at their commands, that were ever ready to ride with them to all actions, at their beck.

"The high parts of the marsh [march] towards Scotlande were put in a mighty fear, and the chiefe of them, for themselves and the rest, petitioned to mee, and did assure mee, that unless I did take some course with them by the end of that summer, there was none of the inhabitants durst, or would, stay in their dwellings the next winter, but they would flee the countrey, and leave their houses and lands to the fury of the outlawes. Upon this complaint, I called the gentlemen of the countrey together, and acquainted them with the misery that the highest parts of the marsh towards Scotland were likely to endure, if there were not timely prevention to avoid it, and desired them to give mee their best advice what course were fitt to be taken. They all showed themselves willing to give mee their best counsailes, and most of them were of opinion, that I was not well advised to refuse the hundred horse that my Lord Euers[1] had; and that now my best way was speedily to acquaint the Quene and counsaille with the necessity of having more soldiers, and, that there should not be less than a hundred horse sent down for the defence of the countrey, besides the forty I had already in pay, and that there was nothing but force of soldiers could

[1] [See the Ballad of Lord Ewrie, p. 417.]

keep them in awe; and to let the counsaile plainly understand, that the marsh, of themselves, were not able to subsist, whenever the winter and long nights came in, unlesse present cure and remedy were provided for them. I desired them to advise better of it, and see if they could find out any other means to prevent their mischievous intentions, without putting the Quene and countrey to any further charge. They all resolved that there was no second meanes. Then I told them my intention what I meant to do, which was, that myself, with two deputies, and the forty-horse that I was allowed, would, with what speed we could, make ourselves ready to go up to the Wastes, and there wee would entrench ourselves, and lye as near as we could to the outlawes: and if there were any brave spirits among them that would go with us, they should be very wellcome, and fare and lye as well as myselfe: and I did not doubt, before the summer ended, to do something that should abate the pride of these outlawes. Those that were unwilling to hazard themselves, liked not this motion. They said, that, in so doing, I might keep the country quiet the time I lay there, but, when the winter approached, I could stay there no longer, and that was the theeves' time to do all their mischiefe. But there were divers young gentlemen that offered to go with mee, some with three, some with four horses, and to stay with mee as long as I would there continue. I took a list of those that offered to go with mee, and found, that with myself, my officers, the gentlemen, and our servants, wee should be about

two hundred good men and horse; a competent number, as I thought, for such a service.

"The day and place was appointed for our meeting in the Wastes, and, by the help of the Foot of Liddis-dale[1] and Risdale, wee had soone built a pretty fort, and within it we had all cabines made to lye in, and every one brought beds or mattresses to lye on. There wee stayed from the middest of June, till almost the end of August. We were betweene fifty and sixty gentlemen, besides their servants and my horsemen; so that we were not so few as two hundred horse. Wee wanted no provisions for ourselves nor our horses, for the countrey people were well paid for any thing they brought us; so that wee had a good market every day, before our fort, to buy what we lacked. The chiefe outlawes, at our coming, fled their houses where they dwelt, and betooke themselves to a large and great forest (with all their goodes,) which was called the Tarras. It was of that strength, and so surrounded with bogges and marish grounds, and thicke bushes and shrubbes, as they feared not the force nor power of England nor Scotland, so long as they were there. They sent me word, that I was like the first puffe of a haggasse,[2] hottest at the first, and

[1] The Foot of Liddesdale was the garrison of King James in the Castle of Hermitage, who assisted Carey on this occasion, as the Armstrongs were outlaws to both nations.

[2] A haggis (according to Burns, "the chieftain of the pudding race") is an olio, composed of the liver, heart, &c. of a sheep,

bade me stay there as long as the weather would give me leave. They would stay in the Tarras Wood till I was weary of lying in the Waste: and when I had had my time, and they no whit the worse, they would play their parts, which should keep me waking the next winter. Those gentlemen of the country that came not with mee, were of the same minde; for they knew (or thought at least) that my force was not sufficient to withstand the furey of the outlawes. The time I staid at the fort I was not idle, but cast, by all means I could, how to take them in the great strength they were in. I found a meanes to send a hundred and fifty horsemen into Scotland (conveighed by a muffled man,[1] not known to one of the company,) thirty miles within Scotland, and the businesse was carried so, that none in the countrey tooke any alarm at this passage. They were quietly brought to the backside of the Tarras, to Scotland-ward. There they divided themselves into three parts, and took up three passages which the outlawes made themselves secure of, if from England side they should at any time be put at. They had their scoutes on the tops

minced down with oatmeal, onions, and spices, and boiled in the stomach of the animal, by way of bag. When this bag is cut, the contents (if this savoury dish be well made) should spout out with the heated air. This will explain the allusion.

[1] A Muffled Man means a person in disguise; a very necessary precaution for the guide's safety; for, could the outlawes have learned who played them this trick, beyond all doubt it must have cost him dear.

of hills, on the English side, to give them warning if at any time any power of men should come to surprise them. The three ambushes were safely laid, without being discovered, and, about four o'clock in the morning, there were three hundred horse, and a thousand foot,[1] that came directly to the place where the scoutes lay. They gave the alarm; our men brake down as fast as they could into the wood. The outlawes thought themselves safe, assuring themselves at any time to escape; but they were so strongly set upon, on the English side, as they were forced to leave their goodes, and betake themselves to their passages towards Scotland. There was presently five taken of the principal of them: The rest, seeing themselves, as they thought, betrayed, retired into the thicke woodes and bogges,[2] that our men durst not follow them, for fear of loosing themselves. The principall of the five that were taken, were two of the eldest sonnes of *Sim of Whitrum*. These five they brought to mee to the fort, and a number of goodes, both of sheep and kine, which satisfied most part of the country that they had stolen them from.

[1] From this it would appear, that Carey, although his constant attendants in his fort consisted only of 200 horse, had upon this occasion, by the assistance, probably, of the English and Scottish royal garrisons, collected a much greater force.

[2] There are now no trees in Liddesdale, except on the banks of the rivers, where they are protected from the sheep. But the stumps and fallen timber, which are everywhere found in the morasses, attest how well the country must have been wooded in former days.

"The five, that were taken, were of great worth and value amongst them; insomuch, that for their liberty, I should have what conditions I should demand or desire. First, all English prisoners were set at liberty. Then had I themselves, and most part of the gentlemen of the Scottish side, so strictly bound in bondes to enter to mee, in fifteen dayes warning, any offendour, that they durst not for their lives break any covenant that I made with them; and so, upon these conditions, I set them at liberty, and was never after troubled with these kind of people. Thus God blessed me in bringing this great trouble to so quiet an end; wee brake up our fort, and every man retired to his own house."—CAREY'S *Memoirs*, p. 151.

The people of Liddesdale have retained, by tradition, the remembrance of *Carey's Raid*, as they call it. They tell, that while he was besieging the outlaws in the Tarras, they contrived, by ways known only to themselves, to send a party into England, who plundered the Warden's lands. On their return, they sent Carey one of his own cows, telling him, that, fearing he might fall short of provision during his visit to Scotland, they had taken the precaution of sending him some English beef. The anecdote is too characteristic to be suppressed.

From this narrative, the power and strength of the Armstrongs, at this late period, appear to have been very considerable. Even upon the death of Queen Elizabeth, this clan, associated with other banditti of

the West Marches, to the number of two or three hundred horse, entered England in a hostile manner, and extended their ravages as far as Penrith. James VI., then at Berwick, upon his journey to his new capital, detached a large force, under Sir William Selby, captain of Berwick, to bring these depredators to order. Their *raid*, remarkable for being the last of any note occurring in history, was avenged in an exemplary manner. Most of the strongholds upon the Liddel were razed to the foundation, and several of the principal leaders were executed at Carlisle; after which we find little mention of the Armstrongs in history. The precautions adopted by the Earl of Dunbar to preserve peace on the Borders, bore peculiarly hard upon a body of men long accustomed to the most ungoverned license. They appear, in a great measure, to have fallen victims to the strictness of the new enactments.—RIDPATH, p. 703.—STOW, 819.—LAING, vol. i. The lands, possessed by them in former days, have chiefly come into the hands of the Buccleuch family, and of the Elliots; so that, with one or two exceptions, we may say, that in the country which this warlike clan once occupied, there is hardly left a landholder of the name.

One of the last Border *reivers* was, however, of this family, and lived within the beginning of the last century. After having made himself dreaded over the whole country, he at last came to the following end:—One ——, a man of large property, having lost twelve

cows in one night, raised the country of Teviotdale, and traced the robbers into Liddesdale, as far as the house of this Armstrong, commonly called *Willie of Westburnflat*, from the place of his residence, on the banks of the Hermitage water. Fortunately for the pursuers, he was then asleep; so that he was secured, along with nine of his friends, without much resistance. He was brought to trial at Selkirk; and, although no precise evidence was adduced to convict him of the special fact, (the cattle never having been recovered,) yet the jury brought him in *guilty* on his general character, or, as it is called in our law, on habit and repute. When sentence was pronounced, Willie arose; and, seizing the oaken chair in which he was placed, broke it into pieces by main strength, and offered to his companions, who were involved in the same doom, that, if they would stand behind him, he would fight his way out of Selkirk with these weapons. But they held his hands, and besought him to let them *die like Christians*. They were accordingly executed in form of law. This incident is said to have happened at the last Circuit Court held at Selkirk.* The people of Liddesdale, who (perhaps not erroneously) still consider the sentence as iniquitous, remarked, that ——, the prosecutor, never throve afterwards, but came to beggary and ruin, with his whole family.

Johnie Armstrong, of Gilnockie, the hero of the following ballad, is a noted personage, both in history and tradition. He was, it would seem from the ballad, a

brother of the Laird of Mangertoun, chief of the name. His place of residence (now a roofless tower) was at the Hollows, a few miles from Langholm, where its ruins still serve to adorn a scene, which, in natural beauty, has few equals in Scotland. At the head of a desperate band of freebooters, this Armstrong is said to have spread the terror of his name almost as far as Newcastle, and to have levied black-mail, or protection and forbearance money, for many miles round. James V., of whom it was long remembered by his grateful people that he made the "rush-bush keep the cow," about 1529, undertook an expedition through the Border counties, to suppress the turbulent spirit of the Marchmen. But before setting out upon his journey, he took the precaution of imprisoning the different Border chieftains, who were the chief protectors of the marauders. The Earl of Bothwell was forfeited, and confined in Edinburgh Castle. The Lords of Home and Maxwell, the Lairds of Buccleuch, Fairniherst, and Johnston, with many others, were also committed to ward. Cockburn of Henderland, and Adam Scott of Tushielaw, called the King of the Border, were publicly executed.—LESLEY, p. 430. The King then marched rapidly forward, at the head of a flying army of ten thousand men, through Ettrick Forest and Ewsdale. The evil genius of our Johnie Armstrong, or, as others say, the private advice of some courtiers, prompted him to present himself before James, at the head of thirty-six horse, arrayed in all the pomp of Border

chivalry. Pitscottie uses nearly the words of the ballad, in describing the splendour of his equipment, and his high expectations of favour from the King. "But James, looking upon him sternly, said to his attendants, 'What wants that knave that a king should have?' and ordered him and his followers to instant execution."—"But John Armstrong," continues this minute historian, "made great offers to the King. That he should sustain himself, with forty gentlemen, ever ready at his service, on their own cost, without wronging any Scottishman: Secondly, that there was not a subject in England, duke, earl, or baron, but, within a certain day, he should bring him to his majesty, either quick or dead.[1] At length, he seeing no hope of favour,

[1] The Borderers, from their habits of life, were capable of most extraordinary exploits of this nature. In the year 1511, Sir Robert Ker of Cessford, Warden of the Middle Marches of Scotland, was murdered at a Border meeting, by the Bastard Heron, Starhead, and Lilburn. The English monarch delivered up Lilburn to justice in Scotland, but Heron and Starhead escaped. The latter chose his residence in the very centre of England, to baffle the vengeance of Ker's clan and followers. Two dependents of the deceased, called Tait, were deputed by Andrew Ker of Cessford to revenge his father's murder. They travelled through England in various disguises, till they discovered the place of Starhead's retreat, murdered him in his bed, and brought his head in triumph to Edinburgh, where Ker caused it to be exposed at the Cross. The bastard Heron would have shared the same fate, had he not spread abroad a report of his having died of the plague, and caused his funeral obsequies to be performed.—RIDPATH'S *History*, p. 481,—See also *Metrical Account of the Battle of Flodden*, published by the Rev. Mr LAMBE.

said very proudly, 'It is folly to seek grace at a graceless face; but,' said he, 'had I known this, I should have lived upon the Borders in despite of King Harry and you both; for I know King Harry would *down-weigh my best horse with gold*, to know that I were condemned to die this day."—PITSCOTTIE'S *History*, p. 145. Johnie and all his retinue were accordingly hanged upon growing trees, at a place called Carlenrig Chapel, about ten miles above Hawick, on the high road to Langholm. The country people believe, that, to manifest the injustice of the execution, the trees withered away. Armstrong and his followers were buried in a deserted churchyard, where their graves are still shown.

As this Border hero was a person of great note in his way, he is frequently alluded to by the writers of the time. Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, in the curious play published by Mr Pinkerton, from the Bannatyne MS., introduces a pardoner or knavish dealer in relics, who produces, among his holy rarities—

——"The cordis, baith grit and lang,
Quhilk hangit Johnie Armistrang,
Of gude hempt, soft and sound.
Gude haly pepil, I stand ford,
Wha'evir beis hangit in this cord,
Neidis never to be drowned!"

PINKERTON'S *Scottish Poems*, vol. ii. p. 69.

In *The Complaynt of Scotland*, John Armistrangis'

dance, mentioned as a popular tune, has probably some reference to our hero.

The common people of the high parts of Teviotdale, Liddesdale, and the country adjacent, hold the memory of Johnie Armstrong in very high respect. They affirm also, that one of his attendants broke through the King's guard, and carried to Gilnockie Tower the news of the bloody catastrophe.

This song was first published by Allan Ramsay, in his *Evergreen*, who says, he copied it from the mouth of a gentleman, called Armstrong, who was in the sixth generation from this John. The reciter assured him, that this was the genuine old ballad, the common one false. By the common one, Ramsay means an English ballad upon the same subject, but differing in various particulars, which is published in Mr Ritson's *English Songs*, vol. ii. It is fortunate for the admirers of the old ballad, that it did not fall into Ramsay's hands when he was equipping with new sets of words the old Scottish tunes in his *Tea-Table Miscellany*. Since his time it has been often reprinted.

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG.

---gree, Of a gen--tle--man I sing a
sang. Some time called laird of Gil--noc.--

--kie. The King has written a kind let-
-ter, With his ain hand, sae ten---der--

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG, CONTINUED.

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG, CONTINUED.

JOHNIE ARMSTRANG.

Sum speikis of lords, sum speikis of lairds,
And sick lyke men of hie degrie;
Of a gentleman I sing a sang,
Sum tyme called Laird of Gilnockie.

The King he wrytes a luving letter,
With his ain hand sae tenderly,
And he hath sent it to Johnie Armstrang,
To cum and speik with him speedily.

The Eliots and Armstrangs did convene;
They were a gallant cumpanie—
"We'll ride and meit our lawful King,
And bring him safe to Gilnockie.

"Make kinnen[1] and capon ready, then,
And venison in great plentie;
We'll wellcum here our royal King;
I hope he'll dine at Gilnockie!"—

[1] *Kinnen*—Rabbits.

They ran their horse on the Langholme howm,
And brak their spears wi' mickle main;
The ladies lukit frae their loft windows—
"God bring our men weel hame agen!"

When Johnie cam before the King,
Wi' a' his men sae brave to see,
The King he movit his bonnet to him;
He ween'd he was a King as weel as he.

"May I find grace, my sovereign liege,
Grace for my loyal men and me?
For my name it is Johnie Armstrang,
And a subject of yours, my liege," said he.

"Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon mayst thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee.'—

"Grant me my life, my liege, my King!
And a bonny gift I'll gie to thee—
Full four-and-twenty milk-white steids,
Were a' foal'd in ae yeir to me.

"I'll gie thee a' these milk-white steids,
That prance and nicker[1] at a speir;

[1] *Nicker*—Neigh.

And as mickle gude Inglish gilt,[1]
As four o' their braid backs dow[2] bear."—

"Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon mayst thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee!"—

"Grant me my life, my liege, my King!
And a bonny gift I'll gie to thee—
Gude four-and-twenty ganging[3] mills,
That gang thro' a' the yeir to me.

"These four-and-twenty mills complete
Sall gang for thee thro' a' the yeir;
And as mickle of gude reid wheit,
As a' thair happers dow to bear."—

"Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon mayst thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee."—

"Grant me my life, my liege, my King!
And a great great gift I'll gie to thee—
Bauld four-and-twenty sisters' sons,
Sall for thee fecht, tho' a' should flee!"

[1] *Gilt*—Gold.—[2] *Dow*—Are able to —[3] *Ganging*—Going.

" Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon mayst thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee."—

" Grant me my life, my liege, my King!
And a brave gift I'll gie to thee—
All between heir and Newcastle town
Sall pay their yeirly rent to thee."—

" Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon mayst thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee."—

" Ye lied, ye lied, now, King," he says,
" Altho' a King and Prince ye be!
For I've luved naething in my life,
I weel dare say it, but honesty—

" Save a fat horse, and a fair woman,
Twa bonny dogs to kill a deir;
But England suld have found me meal and mault,
Gif I had lived this hundred yeir![1]

" She suld have found me meal and mault,
And beef and mutton in a' plentie;

[1] ["If this collection had no other merit than that of preserving

But never a Scots wyfe could have said,
That e'er I skaith'd her a puir flee.

"To seik het water beneith cauld ice,
Surely it is a greit folie—
I have asked grace at a graceless face,
But there is nane for my men and me![1]

"But had I kenn'd ere I cam frae hame,
How thou unkind wadst been to me!
I wad have keepit the Border side,
In spite of all thy force and thee.

"Wist England's King that I was ta'en,
O gin a blythe man he wad be!

the memorials of manners that can never return, it would be entitled to considerable praise. Subsisting by rapine, which they accounted lawful and honourable, they blotted *honesty* out of the list of their virtues, at the same time that they were trained, by their perilous expeditions, to a high degree of enterprising courage, activity, and finesse. The insecurity of their possessions made them free and hospitable in their expenditure; and the common danger bound the several clans together by assurances of inviolable fidelity, and even softened their mutual hostility, by the tacit introduction of certain laws of honour and of war. In these traits, we seem to be reading the description of a Tartarian or Arabic tribe, and can scarcely persuade ourselves that this country contained, within these two centuries, so exact a prototype of the Bedouin character."—*Edinburgh Review* (Sir John Stoddart) for February 1803.]

[1] [This and the three preceding stanzas were among those that Sir Walter Scott most delighted to quote.—Ed.]

For anes I slew his sister's son,
And on his breist bane brak a trie."—

John wore a girdle about his middle,
Imbroider'd ower wi' burning gold,
Bespangled wi' the same metal,
Maist beautiful was to behold.

There hang nine targats[1] at Johnie's hat,
And ilk ane worth three hundred pound—
"What wants that knave that a King suld have,
But the sword of honour and the crown?

"O where got thou these targats, Johnie,
That blink[2] sae brawly abune thy brie?"—
"I gat them in the field fechting,
Where, cruel King, thou durst not be.

"Had I my horse, and harness gude,
And riding as I wont to be,
It suld have been tauld this hundred yeir,
The meeting of my King and me!

"God be with thee, Kirsty,[3] my brother,
Lang live thou Laird of Mangertoun!
Lang mayst thou live on the Border syde,
Ere thou see thy brother ride up and down!

[1] *Targats*—Tassels.—[2] *Blink sae brawlie*—Glance so bravely.—
[3] Christopher.

" And God be with thee, Kirsty, my son,
Where thou sits on thy nurse's knee!
But an thou live this hundred yeir,
Thy father's better thou'lt never be.

" Farewell! my bonny Gilnock hall,
Where on Esk side thou standest stout!
Gif I had lived but seven yeirs mair,
I wad hae gilt thee round about."

John murdered was at Carlinrigg,
And all his gallant companie;
But Scotland's heart was ne'er sae wae,
To see sae mony brave men die—

Because they saved their country deir
Frae Englishmen! Nane were sa bauld,
Whyle Johnie lived on the Border syde,
Nane of them durst cum neir his hauld.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

BALLAD OF JOHNIE ARMSTRANG.

THE Editor believes his readers will not be displeased to see a Bond of Manrent, granted by this Border freebooter to the Scottish Warden of the West Marches, in return for the gift of a feudal casualty of certain lands particularized. It is extracted from *Syme's Collection of Old Writings, MS., penes* Dr Robert Anderson, of Edinburgh.

BOND OF MANRENT.

Be it kend till all men, be thir present letters, me, Johne Armistrang, for to be bound and oblist, and be the tenor of thir present letters, and faith and trewth in my body, lelie and trewlie, bindis and oblissis me and myn airis, to ane nobil and michtie lord, Robert Lord Maxwell, Wardane of the West Marches of Scotland, that, forasmikle as my said lord has given and grantit to me, and mine airs perpetuallie, the non-entries of all and haill the landis underwritten, that is to say, the landis of Dalbetht, Shield, Dalblane, Stapil-Gortown, Langholme, and * * * * * *, with their pertindis, lyand in the lordship of Eskdale, as his gift maid to me, thereupon beris in the self: and that for all the tyme of the nonentres of the samyn. Theirfor, I, the said Johnne Armistrang, bindis and oblissis me and myne airis, in manrent and service to the said Robert Lord Maxwell and his airis, for evermair, first and before all uthirs, mine allegiance to our soverane lord the King, allanerly except; and to be trewe, gude, and

lele servant to my said lord, and be ready to do him service, baith in pece and weir, with all my kyn, friends, and servantes, that I may and dowe to raise, and beand to my said lord's airis for evermair. And sall tak his true and plane part in all maner of actions at myn outer power, and sall nouther wit, hear, nor se my said lordis skaith, lak, nor dishonestie, but we sall stop and lett the samyn, and geif we dowe not lett the samyn, we sall warn him thereof in all possible haist; and geif it happenis me, the said Johne Armistrang, or myne airis, to fail in our said service and manrent, any manner of way, to our said lord, (as God forbid we do,) than, and in that caiss, the gift and nonentres maid be him to us, of the said landis of Dalbetht, Schield, Dalblane, Stapil-Gortown, Langholme, and * * * * * *, with the pertinentis, to be of no avale, force, nor effect; but the said lord and his airis to have free regress and ingress to the nonentres of the samyn, but ony pley or impediment. To the keeping and fulfilling of all and sundry the premisses, in form above writtin, I bind and obliss me and my airis foresaids, to the said lord and his airis for evermare, be the faithis treuthis in our bodies, but fraud or gile. In witness of the whilk thing, to thir letters of manrent subscrievit, with my hand at the pen, my sele is hangin, at Dumfries, the secund day of November, the yeir of God, MD. and XXV. yeiris.

JOHNE ARMISTRANG, with my hand at the pen.

The lands, here mentioned, were the possessions of Armstrong himself, the investitures of which not having been regularly renewed, the feudal casualty of non-entry had been incurred by the vassal. The brother of Johne Armstrong is said to have founded, or rather repaired, Langholm castle, before which, as mentioned in the ballad, verse 5th, they "ran their horse," and "brak their spears," in the exercise of Border chivalry.—*Account of the Parish of Langholm, apud Macfarlane's MSS.* The lands of Langholm and Staplegorton continued in Armstrong's family; for there is in the same MS. collection a similar bond of manrent, granted

by "Cristofer Armstrang, calit *Johne's Pope*," on 24th January, 1557, to Lord Johne Lord Maxwell, and to Sir Johne Maxwell of Terreglis, Knight, his tutor and governor, in return for the gift "of the males of all and haill the landis whilk are conteint in ane bond made by umquhile Johne Armistrang, my father, to umquhile Robert, Lord Maxwell, gudshore to the said Johne, now Lord Maxwell." It would therefore appear, that the bond of manrent, granted by John Armstrong, had been the price of his release from the feudal penalty arising from his having neglected to procure a regular investiture from his superior. As Johne only touched the pen, it appears that he could not write.

Christopher Armstrong, above mentioned, is the person alluded to in the conclusion of the ballad—"God be with thee, Kirsty, my son." He was the father, or grandfather, of William Armstrong, called *Christie's Will*, a renowned freebooter, some of whose exploits the reader will find recorded in another volume of this work.

Mr Ellis of Otterbourne has kindly pointed out the following instance of the ferocity of the Armstrongs, which occurs in the confession of one John Weir, a prisoner in the tolbooth of Edinburgh, under sentence of death, in 1700: "In May, 1700, John Weire went to Grandee Knows, (near Haltwhistle, in Northumberland,) to the mother of the four brethren the Armstrongs, which Armstrongs, and the aforesaid Burley, did cut the tongue and ear out of William Turner, for informing that they were bad persons, which Turner wrote with his blood that they had used him so."—Weire also mentions one Thomas Armstrong, called Luck i' the Bagg, who lived in Cumberland. The extent of their depredations in horse-stealing seems to have been astonishing.[1]

LORD EWRIE.

SIR RALPH EVRE, or Ewrie, or Evers, commemorated in the following lines, was one of the bravest men of a military race. He was son of the first, and father of the second Lord Ewrie; and was himself created a Lord of Parliament during his father's lifetime, in the 35th year of Henry VIII. The ballad is apparently a strain of gratulation upon that event. The poet, or more probably the reciter, has made some confusion in the lineage, by declaring that his hero was "married upon a Willoughbé." His mother, however, was of that family, and he was "kin to the Nevil and to the Percy." He was ennobled by Henry, on account of the vigour with which he prosecuted the Border warfare. But after "harrying the Mers and Tiviotdale, and knocking at Edinburgh gate," Lord Ewrie was slain at the battle of Ancram Moor, fought between him and the Earl of Angus, in 1546.[1] See Note to the *Eve of St John*,—*post.*

[1] [He was buried in Melrose Abbey, and his stone coffin may still be seen there—a little to the left of the Great Altar.—ED.]

This song was written down by my obliging friend, Richard Surtees, Esq. of Mainsforth,[1] from the recitation of Rose Smith, of Bishop Middleham, a woman aged upwards of ninety-one, whose husband's father and two brothers were killed in the affair of 1715.

[1] [The author of the history of Durham.—Ed.]

LORD EWRIE.

Lord Ewrie was as brave a man
As ever stood in his degree;
The King has sent him a broad letter,
All for his courage and loyalty.[1]

Lord Ewrie is of gentill blode,
A knighte's son sooth to say;
He is kin to the Nevill and to the Percy,
And is married upon a Willowbé.

A noble Knight him trained upp,
Sir Rafe Bulmer is the man I mean;[2]
At Flodden field, as men do say,
No better capten there was seen.

[1] Patent letters of nobility.

[2] Sir William Bulmer, of Burnspeth Castle, who is here said to have commanded the troops raised in the Bishopric, in the battle of Floddenfield, was descended from an ancient, and, at one period, noble family. The last who was summoned to Parliament as a Peer of the realm, was Ralph, from 1st till 23d

He led the men of Bishopricke,
When Thomas Ruthal bore the sway:
Though the Scottish Habs[1] were stout and true,
The English bowmen wan that day.

And since he has kepte Berwick upon Tweed,
The town was never better kept I wot;
He maintained leal and order along the Border,
And still was ready to prick the Scot.

The country then lay in great peace,
And grain and grass was sown and won;
Then plenty fill'd the market crosse,
When Lord Ewrie kept Berwick town.

With our Queene's brother he hath been,[2]
And rode rough shod through Scotland of late;
They have burn'd the Mers and Tiviotdale,
And knocked full loud at Edinburgh gate.

Edward III. Sir William routed the Borderers, who, under the command of Lord Home, made an incursion into Northumberland, previous to the Battle of Flodden. He is mentioned in the Metrical History of the Battle, v. 105, &c. In the present ballad, he is erroneously denominated Sir Ralph Bulmer.

[1] [*Habs*—i. e. halberts; spears.]

[2] The Earl of Hertford, afterwards Duke of Somerset, and brother of Queen Jane Seymour, made a furious incursion into Scotland, in 1545. See Introduction.

Now the King hath sent him a broad letter,
A Lord of Parliament to be:
It were well if every nobleman
Stood like Lord Ewrie in his degree.

THE LOCMHABEN HARPER.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED. [1802.]

The Castle of Lochmaben was formerly a noble building, situated upon a peninsula, projecting into one of the four lakes which are in the neighbourhood of the royal burgh, and is said to have been the residence of Robert Bruce, while Lord of Annandale. Accordingly it was always held to be a royal fortress, the keeping of which, according to the custom of the times, was granted to some powerful lord, with an allotment of lands and fishings, for the defence and maintenance of the place. There is extant a grant, dated 16th March, 1511, to Robert Lauder of the Bass, of the office of Captain and keeper of Lochmaben Castle, for seven years, with many perquisites. Among others, the "lands stolen frae the King," *are bestowed on the Captain, as his proper lands. What shall we say of a country, where the very ground was a subject of theft?*

O HEARD ye na o' the silly blind Harper,
How long he lived in Lochmaben town?
And how he wad gang to fair England,
To steal the Lord Warden's Wanton Brown?

But first he gaed to his gude wyfe,
Wi' a' the haste that he could thole—[1]
" This wark," quo' he, " will ne'er gae weel,
Without a mare that has a foal."—

Quo' she, " Thou hast a gude grey mare,
That can baith lance o'er laigh and hie;
Sae set thee on the gray mare's back,
And leave the foal at hame wi' me."—

So he is up to England gane,
And even as fast as he may drie;[2]
And when he cam to Carlisle gate,
O whae was there but the Warden hie?

" Come into my hall, thou silly blind Harper,
And of thy harping let me hear!"—
" O, by my sooth," quo' the silly blind Harper,
" I wad rather hae stabling for my mare."—

The Warden look'd ower his left shoulder,
And said unto his stable groom—
" Gae take the silly blind Harper's mare,
And tie her beside my Wanton Brown."

Then aye he harped, and aye he carped,[3]
Till a' the lordlings footed the floor;

[1] Suffer.—[2] Endure.—[3] Sung

But an the music was sae sweet,
The groom had nae mind o' the stable door

And aye he harped, and aye he carped,
Till a' the nobles were fast asleep;
Then quickly he took aff his shoon,
And saftly down the stair did creep.

Syne to the stable door he hied,
Wi' tread as light as light could be;
And when he open'd and gaed in,
There he fand thirty steeds and three.

He took a cowt halter[1] frae his hose,
And o' his purpose he didna fail;
He slipt it ower the Wanton's nose,
And tied it to his gray mare's tail.

He turn'd them loose at the castle gate,
Ower muir and moss and ilka dale;
And she ne'er let the Wanton bait,
But kept him a-galloping hame to her foal.

The mare she was right swift o' foot,
She didna fail to find the way;
For she was at Lochmaben gate
A lang three hours before the day.

[1] *Cowt halter*—Colt's halter.

When she came to the Harper's door,
There she gave mony a nicker and sneer[1]—
"Rise up," quo' the wife, "thou lazy lass;
Let in thy master and his mare."—

Then up she rose, put on her clothes,
And keekit through at the lock-hole—
"O! by my sooth," then cried the lass,
"Our mare has gotten a braw brown foal!"—

"Come haud thy tongue, thou silly wench!
The morn's but glancing in your ee."—
"I'll wad my hail fee[2] against a groat,
He's bigger than e'er our foal will be."—

Now all this while in merry Carlisle
The Harper harped to hie and law;
And the fiend dought they do[3] but listen him to,
Until that the day began to daw.

But on the morn at fair daylight,
When they had ended a' their cheer,
Behold the Wanton Brown was gane,
And eke the poor blind Harper's mare!

"Allace! allace!" quo' the cunning auld Harper,
"And ever allace that I cam here;

[1] *Nicker and sneer*—Neigh and snort.—[2] *Wad my hail fee*—Bet my whole wages.—[3] *Fiend dought they do*—Nothing could they do.

In Scotland I hae lost a braw cowt foal,
In England they've stown my gude gray mare!"—

"Come! cease thy allacing, thou silly blind Harper,
And again of thy harping let us hear;
And weel payd sall thy cowt-foal be,
And thou sall have a far better mare."—

Then aye he harped, and aye he carped;
Sae sweet were the harpings he let them hear!
He was paid for the foal he had never lost,
And three times ower for the gude GRAY MARE.[1]

[1] The only remark which offers itself on the foregoing ballad seems to be, that it is the most modern in which the harp, as a Border instrument of music, is found to occur.

I cannot dismiss the subject of Lochmaben, without noticing an extraordinary and anomalous class of landed proprietors, who dwell in the neighbourhood of that burgh. These are the inhabitants of four small villages, near the ancient castle, called the Four Towns of Lochmaben. They themselves are termed the King's Rentallers, or *kindly tenants;* under which denomination each of them has a right, of an allodial nature, to a small piece of ground. It is said, that these people are the descendants of Robert Bruce's menials, to whom he assigned, in reward of their faithful service, these portions of land, burdened only with the payment of certain quit-rents, and grassums, or fines, upon the entry of a new tenant. The right of the rentallers is, in essence, a right of property, but, in form, only a right of lease; of which they appeal for the foundation to the rent-rolls of the lord of the castle and manor. This possession, by rental, or by simple entry upon the rent-roll, was anciently a common, and peculiarly sacred, species of property, granted by a chief to his faithful followers;

the connexion of landlord and tenant being esteemed of a nature too necessary to be formal, where there was honour on the one side, and gratitude upon the other. But, in the case of subjects granting a right of this kind, it was held to expire with the life of the granter, unless his heir chose to renew it; and also upon the death of the rentaller himself, unless especially granted to his heirs, by which term only his first heir was understood. Hence, in modern days, the *kindly tenants* have entirely disappeared from the land. Fortunately for the inhabitants of the Four Towns of Lochmaben, the maxim, that the king can never die, prevents their right of property from reverting to the crown. The Viscount of Stormonth, as royal keeper of the castle, did, indeed, about the beginning of last century, make an attempt to remove the rentallers from their possessions, or at least to procure judgment, finding them obliged to take out feudal investitures, and subject themselves to the casualties thereto annexed. But the rentallers united in their common defence: and, having stated their immemorial possession, together with some favourable clauses in certain old acts of Parliament, enacting, that the King's *poor kindly tenants* of Lochmaben should not be hurt, they finally prevailed in an action before the Court of Session. From the peculiar state of their right of property, it follows, that there is no occasion for feudal investitures, or the formal entry of an heir; and, of course, when they choose to convey their lands, it is done by a simple deed of conveyance, without charter or sasine.

The kindly tenants of Lochmaben live (or at least lived till lately) much sequestered from their neighbours, marry among themselves, and are distinguished from each other by *soubriquets*, according to the ancient Border custom, repeatedly noticed. You meet among their writings, with such names as *John Outbye*, *Will In-bye*, *White-fish*, *Red-fish*, &c. They are tenaciously obstinate in defence of their privileges of commonty, &c. which are numerous. Their lands are, in general, neatly enclosed, and well cultivated, and they form a contented and industrious little community.

Many of these particulars are extracted from the MSS. of Mr Syme, writer to the signet. Those who are desirous of more in-

formation, may consult *Craig de Feudis*, lib. ii. dig. 9. sec. 2. It is hoped the reader will excuse this digression, though some what professional; especially as there can be but little doubt that this diminutive republic must soon share the fate of mightier states; for, in consequence of the increase of commerce, lands possessed under this singular tenure, being now often brought to sale, and purchased by the neighbouring proprietors, will, in process of time, be included in their investitures, and the right of rentallage be entirely forgotten.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

NOTICE.

[SIR WALTER SCOTT commenced the composition of ROKEBY at Abbotsford, on the 15th of September 1812, and finished it on the last day of the following December.

The reader may be interested with the following extracts from his letters to his friend and printer, Mr Ballantyne.

"*Abbotsford*, 28*th Oct.* 1812.

"DEAR JAMES,

"I SEND you to-day better than the third sheet of Canto II., and I trust to send the other three sheets in the course of the week. I expect that you will have three cantos complete before I quit this place—on the 11th of November. Surely, if you do your part, the poem may be out by Christmas; but you must not daudle over your typographical scruples. I

have too much respect for the public to neglect any thing in my poem to attract their attention; and you misunderstood me much, when you supposed that I designed any new experiments in point of composition. I only meant to say, that knowing well that the said public will never be pleased with exactly the same thing a second time, I saw the necessity of giving a certain degree of novelty, by throwing the interest more on *character* than in my former poems, without certainly meaning to exclude either incident or description. I think you will see the same sort of difference taken in all my former poems, of which I would say, if it is fair for me to say any thing, that the force in the Lay is thrown on style,—in Marmion, on description,—and in the Lady of the Lake, on incident."

3*d November*.—"As for my story, the conduct of the plot, which must be made natural and easy, prevents my introducing any thing light for some time. You must advert, that in order to give poetical effect to any incident, I am often obliged to be much longer than I expected in the detail. You are too much like the country squire in the what d'ye call it, who commands that the play should not only be a tragedy and comedy, but that it should be crowned with a spice of your pastoral. As for what is popular, and what people like, and so forth, it is all a joke. *Be interesting;* do the thing well, and the only difference will be, that people will like what they never liked before, and will

like it so much the better for the novelty of their feelings towards it. Dulness and tameness are the only irreparable faults."

December 31*st*.—"With kindest wishes on the return of the season, I send you the last of the copy of Rokeby. If you are not engaged at home, and like to call in, we will drink good luck to it; but do not derange a family party.

"There is something odd and melancholy in concluding a poem with the year, and I could be almost silly and sentimental about it. I hope you think I have done my best. I assure you of my wishes the work may succeed; and my exertions to get out in time were more inspired by your interest and John's, than my own. And so *vogue la galère*.

"W. S."]

INTRODUCTION

TO

ROKEBY.

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BETWEEN the publication of "The Lady of the Lake," which was so eminently successful, and that of "Rokeby," in 1813, three years had intervened. I shall not, I believe, be accused of ever having attempted to usurp a superiority over many men of genius, my contemporaries; but, in point of popularity, not of actual talent, the caprice of the public had certainly given me such a temporary superiority over men, of whom, in regard to poetical fancy and feeling, I scarcely thought myself worthy to loose the shoe-latch. On the other hand, it would be absurd affectation in me to deny, that I conceived myself to

understand, more perfectly than many of my contemporaries, the manner most likely to interest the great mass of mankind. Yet, even with this belief, I must truly and fairly say, that I always considered myself rather as one who held the bets, in time to be paid over to the winner, than as having any pretence to keep them in my own right.

In the meantime years crept on, and not without their usual depredations on the passing generation. My sons had arrived at the age when the paternal home was no longer their best abode, as both were destined to active life. The field-sports, to which I was peculiarly attached, had now less interest, and were replaced by other amusements of a more quiet character; and the means and opportunity of pursuing these were to be sought for. I had, indeed, for some years attended to farming, a knowledge of which is, or at least was then, indispensable to the comfort of a family residing in a solitary country-house; but although this was the favourite amusement of many of my friends, I have never been able to consider it as a source of pleasure. I never could think it a matter of passing importance, that my

cattle, or crops, were better or more plentiful than those of my neighbours; and nevertheless I began to feel the necessity of some more quiet out-door occupation, different from those I had hitherto pursued. I purchased a small farm of about 100 acres, with the purpose of planting and improving it, to which property circumstances afterwards enabled me to make considerable additions; and thus an era took place in my life, almost equal to the important one mentioned by the Vicar of Wakefield, when he removed from the Blue-room to the Brown. In point of neighbourhood, at least, the change of residence made little *more* difference. Abbotsford, to which we removed, was only six or seven miles down the Tweed, and lay on the same beautiful stream. It did not possess the romantic character of Ashestiel, my former residence; but it had a stretch of meadow-land along the river, and possessed, in the phrase of the landscape-gardener, considerable capabilities. Above all, the land was my own, like Uncle Toby's Bowling-green, to do what I would with. It had been, though the gratification was long postponed, an early wish of mine to connect myself with my mother-earth,

and prosecute those experiments by which a species of creative power is exercised over the face of nature. I can trace, even to childhood, a pleasure derived from Dodsley's account of Shenstone's Leasowes, and I envied the poet much more for the pleasure of accomplishing the objects detailed in his friend's sketch of his grounds, than for the possession of pipe, crook, flock, and Phillis to boot. My memory, also, tenacious of quaint expressions, still retained a phrase which it had gathered from an old almanack of Charles the Second's time (when everything down to almanacks affected to be smart), in which the reader, in the month of June, is advised for health's sake to walk a mile or two every day before breakfast, and, if he can possibly so manage, to let his exercise be taken upon his own land.

With the satisfaction of having attained the fulfilment of an early and long-cherished hope, I commenced my improvements, as delightful in their progress as those of the child who first makes a dress for a new doll. The nakedness of the land was in time hidden by woodlands of considerable extent—the smallest of possible cottages was progressively expanded into a sort of

dream of a mansion-house, whimsical in the exterior, but convenient within. Nor did I forget what is the natural pleasure of every man who has been a reader, I mean the filling the shelves of a tolerably large library. All these objects I kept in view, to be executed as convenience should serve; and, although I knew many years must elapse before they could be attained, I was of a disposition to comfort myself with the Spanish proverb, "Time and I against any two."

The difficult and indispensable point, of finding a permanent subject of occupation, was now at length attained; but there was annexed to it the necessity of becoming again a candidate for public favour; for, as I was turned improver on the earth of the every-day world, it was under condition that the small tenement of Parnassus, which might be accessible to my labours, should not remain uncultivated.

I meditated, at first, a poem on the subject of Bruce, in which I made some progress, but afterwards judged it advisable to lay it aside, supposing that an English story might have more novelty; in consequence, the precedence was given to "Rokeby."

If subject and scenery could have influenced the fate of a poem, that of "Rokeby" should have been eminently distinguished; for the grounds belonged to a dear friend, with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy for many years, and the place itself united the romantic beauties of the wilds of Scotland with the rich and smiling aspect of the southern portion of the island. But the Cavaliers and Roundheads, whom I attempted to summon up to tenant this beautiful region, had for the public neither the novelty nor the peculiar interest of the primitive Highlanders. This, perhaps, was scarcely to be expected, considering that the general mind sympathizes readily and at once with the stamp which nature herself has affixed upon the manners of a people living in a simple and patriarchal state; whereas it has more difficulty in understanding or interesting itself in manners founded upon those peculiar habits of thinking or acting, which are produced by the progress of society. We could read with pleasure the tale of the adventures of a Cossack or a Mongol Tartar, while we only wonder and stare over those of the lovers in the "Pleasing Chinese

History," where the embarrassments turn upon difficulties arising out of unintelligible delicacies peculiar to the customs and manners of that affected people.

The cause of my failure had, however, a far deeper root. The manner, or style, which, by its novelty, attracted the public in an unusual degree, had now, after having been three times before them, exhausted the patience of the reader, and began in the fourth to lose its charms. The reviewers may be said to have apostrophized the author in the language of Parnell's Edwin :—

> " And here reverse the charm, he cries,
> And let it fairly now suffice,
> The gambol has been shewn."

The licentious combination of rhymes, in a manner not perhaps very congenial to our language, had not been confined to the author. Indeed, in most similar cases, the inventors of such novelties have their reputation destroyed by their own imitators, as Actæon fell under the fury of his own dogs. The present author, like Bobadil, had taught his trick of fence to a hun-

dred gentlemen (and ladies[1]), who could fence very nearly, or quite, as well as himself. For this there was no remedy; the harmony became tiresome and ordinary, and both the original inventor and his invention must have fallen into contempt, if he had not found out another road to public favour. What has been said of the metre only, must be considered to apply equally to the structure of the Poem and of the style. The very best passages of any popular style are not, perhaps, susceptible of imitation, but they may be approached by men of talent; and those who are less able to copy them, at least lay hold of their peculiar features, so as to produce a strong burlesque. In either way, the effect of the manner is rendered cheap and common; and, in

[1] ["Scott found peculiar favour and imitation among the fair sex: there was Mr. Falford, and Miss Mitford, and Miss Francis; but, with the greatest respect be it spoken, none of his imitators did much honour to the original, except Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, until the appearance of 'The Bridal of Triermain' and 'Harold the Dauntless,' which, in the opinion of some, equalled, if not surpassed, him; and lo! after three or four years, they turned out to be the Master's own compositions."]—Byron's *Works*, vol. xv. p. 96.

the latter case, ridiculous to boot. The evil consequences to an author's reputation are at least as fatal as those which come upon the musical composer, when his melody falls into the hands of the street ballad-singer.

Of the unfavourable species of imitation, the author's style gave room to a very large number, owing to an appearance of facility to which some of those who used the measure unquestionably leaned too far. The effect of themore favourable imitations, composed by persons of talent, was almost equally unfortunate to the original minstrel, by shewing that they could overshoot him with his own bow. In short, the popularity which once attended the *School*, as it was called, was now fast decaying.

Besides all this, to have kept his ground at the crisis when "Rokeby" appeared, its author ought to have put forth his utmost strength, and to have possessed at least all his original advantages, for a mighty and unexpected rival was advancing on the stage—a rival not in poetical powers only, but in that art of attracting popularity, in which the present writer had hitherto preceded better men than himself. The

reader will easily see that Byron is here meant, who, after a little velitation of no great promise, now appeared as a serious candidate, in the "First two Cantos of Childe Harold."[1] I was astonished at the power evinced by that work, which neither the "Hours of Idleness," nor the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," had prepared me to expect from its author. There was a depth in his thought, an eagor abundance in his diction, which argued full confidence in the inexhaustible resources of which he felt himself possessed; and there was some appearance of that labour of the file, which indicates that the author is conscious of the necessity of doing every justice to his work, that it may pass war-

[1] ["These two Cantos were published in London in March 1812, and immediately placed their author on a level with the very highest names of his age. The impression they created was more uniform, decisive, and triumphant, than any that had been witnessed in this country for at least two generations. 'I awoke one morning,' he says, 'and found myself famous.' In truth, he had fixed himself, at a single bound, on a summit, such as no English poet had ever before attained, but after a long succession of painful and comparatively neglected efforts." —*Advertisement to* BYRON'S *Life and Works*, vol. viii.]

rant. Lord Byron was also a traveller, a man whose ideas were fired by having seen, in distant scenes of difficulty and danger, the places whose very names are recorded in [illegible] bosoms as the shrines of ancient poetry. For [illegible] own misfortunes, but certainly to [illegible] increase of poetical character, nature [illegible] mixed in Lord Byron's system those passions [illegible] agitate the human heart with most [illegible], and which may be said to have hurried [illegible] his bright career to its early close. The [illegible] could have been little wisdom in measuring [illegible] force with so formidable an antagonist, and [illegible] as likely to tire of playing the second [illegible] the concert, as my audience of hearing me. [illegible] also was advancing. I was growing insensible to those subjects of excitation by which youth is agitated. I had around me the most pleasant but least exciting of all society, that of kind friends and an affectionate family. My circle of employments was a narrow one; it occupied me constantly, and it became daily more difficult for me to interest myself in poetical composition :—

"How happily [illegible] Thalaba went by!"

IX.

Yet, [illegible] I must be, in the opi[illegible]d judges, inferior to the place I ha[illegible] for four or five years held in letters, and [illegible] alike th[illegible] latter was one to which I [illegible]ly a [illegible]orary [illegible] could not brook th[illegible] idea [illegible]lir[illegible]rary [illegible] which had [illegible] so [illegible] of diversion [illegible] sposed [illegible] the alternative [illegible] a m[illegible]l commentator, though tha[illegible]ur which I had practised, [illegible]t [illegible]ached. But I could not [illegible]e [illegible]k [illegible] might not, [illegible]ethe. kn[illegible]or[illegible]eated, do something of more impo[illegible]. My inmost thoughts were those of t[illegible]ojan Captain in the galley race,—

"N[illegible]am prim[illegible]peto M[illegible]ae [illegible]re ce[illegible] [illegible]nO!—[illegible]d super[illegible] [illegible]e, d[illegible] Extre[illegible]ediisse [illegible] Et prohi[illegible]tas."[1]—Æ[illegible]

[1] ["I se[illegible]ot now the fore[illegible]os
Though yet—but ah! th[illegible] haug[illegible]
Let those enjoy it whon[illegible]ds ord[illegible]
But to be last, the lag[illegible]
Redeem your[illegible]lves ar[illegible]

[illegible]DRYDEN.]

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